

John Arden
1799

THE
ADVENTURES
OF
HUGH TREVOR.

VOL. III.



THE
ADVENTURES
OF
HUGH TREVOR.

BY THOMAS HOLCROFT.

— 'TIS SO PAT TO ALL THE TRIBE
EACH SWEARS THAT WAS LEVELLED AT ME:
GAY.

VOLUME III.

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THE
ADVENTURES
OF
HUGH TREVOR.

CHAP. I.

GLOOMY THOUGHTS : FILIAL EMOTIONS : A
JOURNEY TO THE COUNTRY : A LAWYER'S
ACCOUNTS NOT EASILY CLOSED : CONSCIEN-
TIOUS SCRUPLES : THE LEGACY RECEIVED AND
DIVIDED : RETURN TO OXFORD : MORE DIS-
APPOINTMENT : TREACHERY SUSPECTED : AR-
RIVAL AT LONDON ; DIFFICULTY IN CHOOS-
ING A PROFESSION.

MY agitation of mind was too violent
to be quickly appeased ; it did not end
with the day, or with the week ; but on
the contrary excited interrogatories that
prolonged the paroxysm. Why was I
disturbed ? Why angry with myself ?

VOL. III.

A

Why

Why did I accuse Olivia of being severe, or what did the accusation mean? What were my views? From the tumultuous state of my emotions, I could not disguise to myself that I had an affection for her: but had she ever intimated an affection for me? Was the passion that devoured me rational? She was of a wealthy family: of the provision her father had made for her I was ignorant; but I knew that her expectations from the aunt, said to be now dying, and from others of her kindred, were great. Was I prepared to accept favours, make myself a-dependent, and be subservient to the unfeeling caprice of Hector, or any other proud and ignorant relation? Did not such people esteem wealth as the test and the measure of worth? What counterpoise had I, but sanguine hopes? of the probable fallacy of which I had already received strong proofs; and which did not, in the pictures that fancy at present drew, burst upon me with those bright
and

and vivid flashes that had lately made them so alluring. My passions and propensities all led me to seek the power of conferring benefits, controlling folly, and of being the champion of merit, and the rewarder of virtue. Ought I not either to renounce Olivia, or to render myself in every respect her equal; and to disdain the degrading insolence with which any pretensions of mine would otherwise be received. Had I no reason to fear that Olivia herself was a little influenced by personal considerations? Would she have been quite so ready to disapprove, had the advantages of fortune been on my side? Was this inferiority entirely disregarded by her? The doubt was gratifying, but pertinaciously intrusive. Would not any proposal from me be treated with the most sovereign contempt, if not by her, by Hector and her other relations? Why then did I think of her? It was but a very few days since the wealth and power that should have raised me,

far above the sphere of the Mowbray family, were supposed to be within my grasp. How painful was the distance at which they now appeared! My present debility was felt with intolerable impatience. To love and to be unable to heap happiness on the object beloved, was a thought that assailed me with excruciating sensations!

At this very period another event happened, that did not contribute to enliven the prospect.

I had lately received intelligence from my mother, the tenor of which was that she dreaded the approach of poverty; and about a fortnight after the departure of Olivia, a letter came, by which I learned that lawyer Thornby had refused all further supplies, affirming that my grandfather's effects were entirely exhausted; except the thousand pounds left by the rector at my own disposal. Of this I had already received fifty pounds; and my mother urgently declared

clared in her letter that, if I did not apply part of the remainder for her support, she should be left in the decline of life (the approach of which she was now very ready to acknowledge) in imminent danger of want; nay, so as perhaps even to come upon the parish. My pride revolted at the very thought; and I was angry with her for having conceived or committed it to paper.

Should I suffer my mother to want? No. To become a pauper? My heart spurned at the base suggestion. I had been several years under the tuition of the rector, and had acquired more than was good of his family dignity. The picture before me was not a pleasing one, but I would subject myself to any hardships, ay would starve on a grain a day, rather than abandon my mother. My motives were mixed; some wrong some right.

This affair made me resolve once more to visit my native country, and my re-

solution was immediately put in practice. It was a relief, though of a painful kind, to the more painful state in which my undecided thoughts at that moment held me. The man whose contradictory impulses goad him in a thousand different directions, without permitting him to pursue any one, is happy to be put in motion.

My arrival was unexpected : my mother, who was but little inclined to accuse herself, received me with much more satisfaction than embarrassment.

The behaviour of Thornby was not quite so self-complacent. My questions, concerning the receipt and disbursement of my grandfather's property, were sometimes answered with the affectation of open honesty ; and at others with petulant ambiguity, so that I knew not whether he meant to shun or to provoke inquiry. ' Executorship was a very thank-

' less office ; it involved a man in continu-

' al trouble, for which he could receive

' no

‘ no recompence, and then subjected him
‘ to the suspicions of people, who were
‘ unable or unwilling to look after their
‘ own affairs. His very great friend-
‘ ship for the rector had induced him to
‘ take this office upon himself, though he
‘ well knew the trouble and tediousness
‘ attending it, and the ingratitude with
‘ which it was always repaid. He had
‘ several times in his life played the fool
‘ in the same way, and had always met
‘ with the same reward.’

Equivocation is the essence of law, and
I believe he spoke truth.

‘ He should take care, however, not
‘ to involve himself in such officious
‘ troubles for the future. As for the ac-
‘ counts, he was ready at all times, and
‘ desirous to have them settled. He
‘ had been plagued enough, and had even
‘ paid money out of his own pocket,
‘ which he was sure, whenever a balance
‘ came to be struck, he should not be
‘ reimbursed. But there were various

‘ affairs that he could not immediately
‘ close ; law accounts, bad debts, mort-
‘ gages, and other matters that required
‘ time. He had business of his own to
‘ which he must attend, or be ruined ; his
‘ clients would have good actions against
‘ him, if it could be proved that their suits
‘ were lost by his neglect. Indeed he
‘ was not bound to give me any account ;
‘ but he always acted on the square, and
‘ therefore defied scrutiny ; nay, he wish-
‘ ed it, for what had an honest man to
‘ fear ?’

He talked so much of his honesty that, if he did not quite persuade me it was immaculate, he at least led me to doubt.

Beside, as he had reminded me, what claims had I ? The property was bequeathed to my mother ; she had married, her husband had squandered it away, and there was an end of it. Farther inquiry was but vexation and loss of time. It is true, the supposed wealth of the
rector

rector had quickly disappeared : but if the owner of it, my mother's husband, were satisfied, what could be said ?

She indeed hinted to me that Wakefield, finding he could wrest no more from his uncle, unless by filing a bill in Chancery, or some other process at law, for which he had no funds, not to mention the great chance of his being cast in costs of suit, had been obliged to desist ; though convinced that the property was not one half expended. He had a better hope. Thornby was old, had no children, and might soon leave him the whole.

With most men this would have been a powerful motive ; but the passions of her young husband, my mother owned, were too impetuous to be restrained by the cold considerations of prudence. At first she censured him with reluctance ; for to censure him was in reality to adduce mementos of her own folly ; but her resentment against him for having deserted her pre-

sently overpowered her caution, and the pictures she drew shewed him to be not only dissipated and prodigal but unprincipled. He had even so far offended the law, that it was doubtful whether his life were not in danger; and Thornby, whose plans had been frustrated by his extravagance, had more ways than one of ridding himself of his importunity.

In any case it was necessary to make some provision for my mother; and, embroiled in doubt as I was, the most prudent way that I could imagine was to consult Thornby.

He affected to be very conscientious, and scarcely knew what advice to give. ‘ My mother was in want, and to desert her would be cruel; yet the money that was devised me was my own: it was bequeathed for a good purpose, and the pious will of the testator ought to be held sacred. I was young, the grandson of a good man, an excellent man, and his dear friend. I had great learning

‘ learning and good sense, and ought not
‘ to be deprived of the means that had
‘ been left me of establishing myself in
‘ life. But then my mother had been
‘ tenderly brought up, and a dutiful son
‘ to be sure could not desert his parent.
‘ It was a difficult point. To purchase
‘ a life annuity for her would be the best
‘ way of securing her, against the mi-
‘ series of poverty in old age ; but then
‘ it would sink deeply into the thousand
‘ pounds to make but a very moderate
‘ provision of this kind ; though he knew
‘ no other method in her case that would
‘ be so safe.’

While I listened I resolved. To provide for my mother I held to be an indispensable duty ; and, notwithstanding my late disappointments, my fears for myself were but few. People of a sanguine temper are subject to temporary doubt and gloom ; but the sky soon clears, and though one bright star may shoot and fall, hope soon creates a whole

con-

constellation. The earl and the prelate had both been uprincipled; but the failure was in them, not in me. I could not but remember the terror that Themistocles had excited in a prime minister; and the avidity with which a prelate had endeavoured to profit by my theological talents. How certainly and how soon could I bring these talents into notice! How easy the task! I need but mount the rostrum, I need but put pen to paper, and my adversaries would be brought to shame, and mankind taught to do me justice. Incontrovertible facts were in my favour; and to foster doubts and fears would be cowardice, self-desertion, and folly! Such were my conclusions.

I determined therefore, without farther hesitation, to employ the sum of five hundred pounds in the purchase of an annuity for my mother. The remainder would amply supply me, till those rich mines should be explored from the fertile

tile veins of which I had already drawn such dazzling specimens.

I continued in the country almost three weeks ; but, as the purchase could not instantly be concluded, I left the stipulated sum in my mother's possession, drew the remainder of the thousand pounds in bills and cash from Thornby, and, with more wealth than I ever bore about me at one time before, returned to Oxford.

Though Olivia was daily and hourly remembered, I had recovered so far by the business in which I had been engaged as to think seriously of pursuing my studies; for by their aid I was to realize those splendid projects on which, as I supposed, the happiness of man depends.

The learning, which the general forms of taking a degree require, is so little that a man of genius is inclined to treat it with contempt : but, if the candidate happen to be obnoxious to the heads of the university, his examination may then
be

be of a very different kind. I had not much doubt ; for, from the questions and answers I had so often heard on these occasions, to reject me seemed to be almost impossible. Yet I was not entirely without alarm. The disgrace of rustication that I had suffered, the coldness of the reception I had met from the president on my return to college, and the ambiguity which I conceived I had since remarked in his manner, excited some fear ; and my preparatory efforts were so strenuous that I imagined I might defy reproof.

I had been told indeed that malice had a very strange mode of exerting itself, but which was so arbitrary and odious as to be but rarely practised. Any member of convocation, or master of arts, without assigning any cause for his conduct, may object, for two terms, to a person who shall ask leave to take his degree ! Nay, these terms ended, another may object, and another ! But this was
a pri-

a privilege so disgusting that I had not the least apprehension it would be put in practice against me.

To my utter astonishment, I was mistaken! On the day appointed to ask leave, a master of arts actually did appear, and without supporting his objection by reasoning charge or censure, exercised this detestable university veto.

My surprize and indignation, at hearing him pronounce his negative, were so great that I was deprived of utterance. I even doubted the reality of what I heard: I stood gazing, till he was gone, and then exclaimed, as if to a person present—"Me, Sir! — Do you mean me?"

A minute afterward, my interjections were not quite so inoffensive. A torrent of passion burst from me, and he, whose malignity could not justly assert I wanted learning, might, had he stayed, have collected sufficient proofs of my want of philosophy.

My

My attention had been diverted from the accuser, by my amazement at the accusation ; but, as soon as I recovered my recollection, it seemed to me certain that I knew his face. The idea was seized with so much eagerness, and associations occurred so rapidly, that the figure of one of my companions, on the night of the debauch when I first came to Oxford, rose full before me ; though he had been absent from the university, so that till this day I had never seen him since. It was the very tutor of the Earl of Idford !

A train of the most tormenting suspicions rushed upon me. I soon learned, from inquiry, that he was intimate likewise with the president. Was not this a combination ? What could it be else ? This tutor was connected with the earl and the president ; so was the latter with the bishop !

The whole plot, in its blackest hues, seemed developed.

My

My agitation was extreme. I ran from college to college, wherever I had acquaintance, repeating all I knew and much of what I suspected. Nor did I merely confine myself to narrative. I added threats, which, however impotent they might be, were not the less violent. One of my first projects was to seek personal satisfaction of the vile tutor, or if he refused to chastise him with inexorable severity ; but this he had taken care to elude, by keeping out of the way.

My denunciations soon reached the ear of the president, and I was given to understand that, if I were not immediately silent, I should be expelled the university ; and that a degree would never be granted me, till I had publicly retracted the opprobrious words I had uttered. Distant consequences are easily defied. My blood was in a flame, and despising the menace, I publicly declared that my persecutors were as infamous as the tool they had employed ; that I should

should think it a disgrace to be a member of a body which could countenance proceedings so odiously wicked ; that I spurned at every honour such a body could confer ; and that, with respect to expulsion, I would myself erase my name from the register in which it had unfortunately been entered.

How little is man aware that by intemperance he damns his own cause, and gives the face of seeming honesty to injustice itself ! Vicious as the place is, I myself could not abhor such proceedings more than many men in Oxford would have done, had they believed the tale.

Fortune still continued in her wayward mood. On the heel of one perverse imp another often treads. While I remained at Oxford, which was but a few days after this event, the retailing of my wrongs was my chief employment ; and in a coffee-room, to which I resorted for this purpose, the following advertisement in

in a London newspaper met my astonished eye!

THIS DAY IS PUBLISHED:
A DEFENCE OF THE THIRTY NINE ARTICLES:
BY THE
RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD *****
LORD BISHOP OF *****

Injustice had by this time become so familiar to me that, scourged even to frenzy as I was, I sat rather stunned than transfixed by the blow. That this was the very defence of the articles I had written did not, with me, admit of a moment's doubt. Every thing I had heard or remarked, of this wicked but weak church governor, had afforded proof of his incapacity for such a task; yet the injustice, effrontery and vice of the act was what till seen could not have been believed!

Nor did its baseness end here. What could I suppose, but that the bishop had been assiduously tampering with the president;

president; that they and the earl were in a conspiracy against me; that this was the cause of the disgrace and insult put upon me; and that, having robbed me of my writings, there was a concerted and fixed plan to render me contemptible, take away my character, and devote me to ruin?

The longer I thought the more painful were the sensations that assaulted me. I had already been complaining to the whole city. Some few indeed seemed to credit me; but more to suspect; and none heard of my treatment with that glowing detestation which my feelings required. Were I to tell this new tale, incredibly atrocious as it was, what would men think, but that I was a general calumniator, a frantic egotist, and a man dangerous to society? The total inability that I felt in myself, to obtain ample and immediate justice, almost drove me mad.

I had previously determined to quit
Oxford,

Oxford, and this new goad did but quicken my departure. My preparations were soon made ; and from some vague, and to myself undefined ideas, partly of expedition, and partly of letting the president, the college, and the whole university see that I, Hugh Trevor, was no ordinary person, a chaise and four waited my commands at the gate about noon the next day, behind which my goods and chattels were buckled, and I, after taking leave of the two or three friends who were thoughtless or courageous enough to acknowledge me, threw myself indignantly into it, with more maledictions in my heart than my impatient tongue could find energy to utter.

Arrived in London, it especially became me, as I supposed, to assume that consequence which should teach my enemies respect. I had money in my pocket, anger impelling me, and more pride than prudence. A waiter was dispatched

patched from the Gloucester coffee-house, and apartments for myself and a valet were hired, in Half Moon Street, at three guineas and a half per week. The valet was a sudden decision, originating in the same false feelings that had lately taken possession of me. When I consulted the mistress of the coffee-house concerning apartments, she said, "you have a servant to be sure, Sir?" "Yes, madam;" replied my alarmed vanity. "No, madam;" instantly retorted my veracity, still more alarmed; "but I mean to hire one." "There," continued she, pointing to a smart well powdered young fellow that was talking to one of the waiters, "there stands one out of place, who I dare say will be glad of a good master. Here, Philip!"

I was one of the fools who, right or wrong, imagine it behooves them to be consistent. I was ashamed to retract, had not learned to prevaricate, and
Philip,

Philip, to whom as a footman I could discover no rational objection, was hired.

My effects were presently removed; my useless valet sent to loiter, and improve himself in vice, as valets usually are, and I left to meditate on the plan I had to pursue.

A little reflection induced me to renounce all thoughts of the church; for which indeed the doubts that the conversation of Turl had inspired me with, the inquiries to which these doubts led, and the disgust I had conceived at the character and conduct of the bishop had well prepared me.

For some time I sat perplexed in thought. During the life of the rector, I had often been told that the law was the road to honour; and when at the university, being eager to secure this said honour to myself, I had laboriously read some of the civilians. I say laboriously, for the task was far from inviting.

inviting. The obscurity of their terms, the contradictions I thought I discovered, and the voluminous perplexity in which the whole was involved, were no alluring pictures.

With what pleasure did the wearied intellect escape from this wilderness of weeds and brambles, to rove through the paradise of poetry. The minstrelsy of genius, sporting with the fancy rousing the passions and unfolding the secrets of the heart, could fascinate at all times; while nothing could sooner create lassitude and repugnance than the incongruous jargon of law.

But, alas, who ever heard of a poet being made Lord High Chancellor? Appoint him to such a station and he would act like a madman! Instead of employing his journeymen to dig through the rubbish of ignorance for precedents, he would listen to the wants of the injured, and would conceive that by relieving them only he could do justice! Did not

the history of the world proclaim that, he who would attain wealth and power must turn the prejudices of mankind to their own harm?

CHAP. II.

THE PLAY-HOUSE, AND AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE: SATIRICAL PORTRAITS: RECEPTION OF A NEW COMEDY; OR, OF HOW MUCH WORTH ARE PRAISE AND BLAME?

THESE were painful reflections, and, leaving the case undetermined for the present, I escaped from them by shifting the scene to the play-house. It happened to be the first night of a new comedy, and here in the boxes I perceived an acquaintance, whom I had met at the house of Ellis. His name was Glibly, and the moment he saw me enter he advanced and accosted me with that familiarity which was essential to his character.

Glad of company, in a city where I was so little known, I freely entered into conversation with him; and the amusement he afforded me well repaid my complaisance. He had long been what is called upon the town, and was acquainted more or less with all orders of men. He was intimate with authors, actors, and artists, of every kind and degree; knew their private and public history, could give anecdotes of each, and enumerate their various performances. Opera girls and their keepers, musicians and musical dilettanti, connoisseurs and their jackalls, (picture dealers and auctioneers) collectors, shell fossil and fiddle fanciers, in short every class of idlers that I have since found swarming in this miscellaneous town ranked among his acquaintance.

He had long, as I afterward discovered, been a newspaper critic; had written prologues, appeared in poet's corner, abounded in sarcastic remarks, and possessed an Athenian loquacity. He had indeed

indeed a copious vocabulary, an uncommon aptitude of phrase, though not free from affectation, and a tide of tongue that was incessant.

He probably thought my personal appearance creditable, for he did not quit me during the performance, but amused me with the satirical portraits of various people, whom he pointed out to me in the house.

‘Do you see that man,’ said he, ‘who is just entering; three boxes distant on the right? He is handing two ladies to their seats, and is followed by a youngster who is all pertness and powder. They make a great shew, and on a first night give an appearance of good company. That is Mynbeer van Hopmeister, a Dutch dancing-master, with his daughter, son, and a kept mistress. They live all together on very good terms; and his own girl has preserved her character by her ugliness, affectation, and ill breeding. He drives about in

his chariot, which passing in the street you would suppose belonged to a Neapolitan Count, or a German Envoy at least. He gives dinners occasionally of several removes, to which he invites all the fools and fiddlers he can find, treats with French wines, and usually makes up a quartet party for the evening, which he spoils by playing a principal part himself. He is nearly two thousand pounds in debt; and, in all things mimicking the great, has been obliged to put his affairs to nurse. Except the booby his son, he is the most prating, forward, ignorant coxcomb of my acquaintance; and that is a bold word. But his impertinence makes him amusing: I will introduce you.'

I thanked my gentleman for his politeness, but declined the offer; and he continued.

'Look at that man in brown, leaning against the pillar! He is a painter, and
a man

a man of genius; but the greatest ass existing !'

'How? Of genius, and—!'

'Hear and judge for yourself. No man has studied his art with so much assiduity and zeal, or practised it with greater enthusiasm; but, instead of confining himself to portrait-painting, by which with half the labour and one tenth of the talent he might have made a fortune, he devoted all his youth to poverty and starving, and undertook a series of paintings that would have immortalized a man under the patronage of Leo. X. This task he was years in accomplishing, living all the while on little better than bread and water, and that procured by robbing his nights of the hours of rest; for his pride, which he calls independence, is as great as his ambition, which he dignifies with the title of a love of fame. But the most prominent trait in his character is a jealous——'

Here my commentator, suddenly interrupting himself, pressed my arm, and bade me turn to the left.

‘There,’ said he pointing, ‘is a Mr. Migrate; a famous clerical character, and as strange an original as any this metropolis affords. He is not entitled to make a figure in the world either by his riches, rank, or understanding; but with an effrontery peculiar to himself he will knock at any man’s door, though a perfect stranger, ask him questions, give him advice, and tell him he will call again to give him more the first opportunity. By this means he is acquainted with every body, but knows nobody; is always talking, yet never says any thing; is perpetually putting some absurd interrogation, but before it is possible he should understand the answer puts another. His desire to be informed torments himself and every man of his acquaintance, which is almost every man he meets; yet, though he lives inquiring,
he

He will die consummately ignorant. His brain is a kind of rag shop, receiving and returning nothing but rubbish. It is as difficult to affront as to get rid of him; and though you fairly bid him begone to-day, he will knock at your door, march into your house, and if possible keep you answering his unconnected fifty times answered queries to-morrow. He is the friend and the enemy of all theories and of all parties; and tortures you to decide for him which he ought to chuse. As far as he can be said to have opinions, they are crude and contradictory in the extreme; so that in the same breath he will defend and oppose the same system. With all this confusion of intellect, there is no man so wise but he will prescribe to him how he ought to act, and even send him written rules for his conduct. He has been a great traveller, and continually abuses his own countrymen for not adopting the manners and policy of

the most ignorant, depraved, and barbarous nations of Europe and Africa. He pretends to be the universal friend of man, a philanthropist on the largest scale, yet is so selfish that he would willingly see the world perish, if he could but secure paradise to himself. Indeed he can think of no other being; and his child, his canary bird, his cook-maid, or his cat, are the most extraordinary of God's creatures. This is the only consistent trait in his character. In the same sentence, he frequently joins the most fulsome flattery and some insidious question; that asks the person, whom he addresses, if he do not confess himself to be both knave and fool. Delicacy of sentiment is one of his pretensions, though his tongue is licentious, his language coarse, and he is occasionally seized with fits of the most vulgar abuse. He declaims against dissimulation, yet will smilingly accost the man whom——
“Ha! Migrate! How do you do?
Give me leave to introduce you to Mr.
Trevor,

Trevor, a friend of mine; a gentleman and a scholar; just come from Oxford. Your range of knowledge and universal intimacy, with men and things, may be useful to him; and his erudite acquisitions, and philosophical research, will be highly gratifying to an inquirer like you. An intercourse between you must be mutually pleasing and beneficial, and I am happy to bring you acquainted."

This, addressed to the man whom he had been satirizing so unsparingly, was inconceivable! The unabashed facility with which he veered, from calumny to compliment, the very moment too after he had accused the man whom he accosted of dissimulation, struck me dumb. I had perhaps seen something like it before, but nothing half so perfect in its kind. It doubly increased my stock of knowledge; it afforded a new instance of what the world is, and a new incitement to ask how it became so? The inquiry at first was painful, and

half convinced me of the truth of manicheism ; but deeper research taught me that the errors of man do not originate in the perversity of his nature, but of his ignorance.

These however were most of them after thoughts, for Glibly did not allow us any long pause.

‘ Yonder, in the green boxes,’ said he, ‘ I perceive Mrs. Fishwife, the actress. She should have played in the comedy we are come to see, but threw up her part from scruples of conscience. It was not sufficiently refined for her exquisite sensibility ; it wounded her feelings, offended her morals, and outraged her modesty. Yet in the Green-room, she is never happy unless when the men are relating some lewd tale, or repeating obscene jests ; at every one of which she bursts into a horse laugh, and exclaims —“ Oh, you devil ! But I don’t hear you ! I don’t understand a word you say !”

To

To heighten the jest, her amours are as public as the ladies on Harris's List.'

'But perhaps there is something violently offensive and immoral, in the part she refused?'

'Not a syllable. The writer is too dull even for a *double entendre*, as you will hear. Mere pretence. The author, who happens by some odd accident to have more honesty than wit, and could not in conscience comply with the present vicious mode of bestowing indiscriminate praise on actors, when no small mixture of blame had been merited by many of them, forbore to write a preface to his last piece; from which she had thought herself secure of a large dose of flattery. This is an offence she can never pardon.'

'I have heard, said Migrate, that our actresses are become exceedingly squeamish.'

'Oh ridiculous beyond belief. I have a letter in my pocket from a young friend

friend in a country company, the ladies of which have their sensibility strung up to so fine a tone that he cannot take the tragedy of King Lear for his benefit, because not one of them will play either Regan or Goneril. If their feelings are so exquisite in the country, where our wise laws treat players as vagabonds, what must they be when loaded with all the legal, tragic, and royal dignity of a London theatre ?

This was so incredible that I expressed my doubts of the fact ; but they were ill founded, for Glibly produced the letter.

A moment afterward two more of his acquaintance caught his eye.

‘ Look to the right,’ said he ; ‘ the box next the gallery. There they sit ! Mr. and Mrs. Whiffle-Wit ! They are now in state ! They have really a capacious appearance ! Were Rubens or Jordaens but here, we should have them painted in all the riches of oil colours,
I grinning

grinning in company with Silenus and his ass. Let the poor author beware; they are prodigious critics! Madam can write a farce, or even a solution to an enigma, with as little labour as any lady in the land; and her dear Mr. Whiffle-Wit can set them both to music, with no less facility and genius! Nothing can equal them, except his own jigs on the organ! They never fail to attend the first night of a new play; and their taste is so very refined that nothing less than writing it themselves could afford them satisfaction. They never admire any nonsense but their own. The manager and author have always to thank them for exerting their whole stock of little wit, and abundant envy, to put the house into an ill temper. The favour is the more conspicuous because they are *orderly people*. But that perhaps is a phrase you do not understand, Mr. Trevor? They never pay for their places; yet always occupy a first row for themselves, and in
general

general the rest of the box for their friends; who they take good care shall be as well disposed toward the house and the author as they are. You may be sure to meet them to-morrow, very industriously knocking at every door where they can gain admission, to tell their acquaintance what a vile piece it was; and what a strange blockhead the manager must be, who had refused farces of their writing, and operas of their setting, yet could dare to insult the town with such trash! They have now continued for years in this state of surprise, and there is no knowing when it will end.'

The satire of Glibly was incessant, till the tinkling of the prompter's bell, and the rising of the curtain, put an end to his remarks on persons, and turned them all on the piece. I cannot but own the author opened an ample field for the effluvia of critic gall. I know not whether Glibly might influence the tone of my mind, but I think I never felt such
ineffable

ineffable contempt for any human production as for the thing called a comedy, which I that night saw. Disjointed dialogue, no attempt at plan or fable, each scene a different story, and each story improbable and absurd, quibbles without meaning, puns without point, cant without character, sentiments as dull as they were false, and a continual outrage on manners, morals and common sense, were its leading features. Yet, strange to tell, the audience endured it all; and, by copious retrenchments and plaistering and patching, this very piece had what is called a run!

How capricious a thing is public taste! It can regale on garbage, from which Hottentots would turn with loathing, and yet, in the frenzy of idiotism, could reject and condemn Congreve's "Way of the World!"

Glibly treated the piece with unceasing contempt, yet clapped every scene; and when, on two or three occasions, some
few

few raised their voices and called *off!* *off!* he more loudly than the rest vociferated, *Go on! go on!* When it was over, he left me; saying it was the most execrable piece he had ever beheld; but he had promised to give it a good character, in the paper with which he was connected, and this he must immediately go and write.'

CHAP. III.

REPETITION OF DOUBTS: A VERY OLD ACQUAINTANCE: ANOTHER PLEASING RENCONTRE: PERPLEXITY AND SUSPENSE CREATED.

THE adventures of the evening sent me home with no very agreeable reflections. What a world was this! How replete with folly, hypocrisy, and vice! What certainty had the man of virtue that his claims should be heard? Amid the tumultuous pursuits of selfishness, where all were eager to gratify their own passions

sions and appease the capricious cravings of vanity, how might truth and worth ascertain success? The comedy I had seen had convinced me that farce, inanity, and supreme nonsense, might not only pass current but find partisans; yet proofs in abundance were on record that genius itself had no security against faction, envy, and mistaken opposition. I was at present in a state of warfare: and were judges like these to give the meed of victory? How many creatures had the powerful and the proud obedient to their beck; ever ready to affirm, deny, say and unsay; and, by falsehood and defamation, involve in ruin men whose souls were the most pure, and principles the most exalted!

For some days I remained in a state of suspense, continually determining to seek the satisfaction which I supposed my injuries demanded, but undecided with respect to the method.

This delay was still prolonged by another

ther event. My man Philip, one morning when he brought my breakfast, told me that a woman in the house, who lived with a young lady on the second floor, had asked him various questions concerning me; saying she was sure she knew me, that she loved me from her soul, for that I had once saved the life of her and her dear boy, and that she wished very much to see me.

At first this account surprised me. A woman and a boy whose lives I had saved? Where is she, said I? Below in the kitchen, answered Philip. I bade him desire her to come up; and in a few minutes a woman about the age of forty entered, but of whose countenance I had no clear recollection. 'I beg pardon, Sir,' said she, 'for my boldness, but your name I believe is Mr. Trevor?'

'It is.'

'Mr. Hugh Trevor?'

'The same.'

'God in his mercy bless and keep you!

Since

Since the night that you saved my life, I never went to bed without praying for you. But you were always a kind, dear, good child ; and your uncle, Mr. Elford, was the best of men !

The epithet, child, and the name of Elford instantly solved the riddle : it was poor Mary ; and the boy, whose life I had saved, was the child of which she was delivered, after the adventure of the barn. Her features suddenly became as it were familiar to me. She revived a long train of ideas, inspiring that kind of melancholy pleasure which mind so much delights to encourage. I kissed her with sincere good will : and in sympathy with my feelings the poor creature, yielding to her affections, clasped me round the neck, pressed me to her cheek, exclaimed ‘ God in heaven for ever bless you ! ’ then, suddenly recollecting herself, with that honest simplicity which was so constitutionally her character, dropped on
her

knees, and added, ' I humbly beg pardon, Sir, for being so bold !'

After some persuasion, I prevailed on her to sit down : but I could not conquer her timidity and imaginary inferiority so far as to induce her to partake of my breakfast. ' She knew her duty better ; I was a gentleman, once her dear young master, and she should always adore me, and act as was befitting a poor servant, like her.'

We talked over former affairs, and she brought many scenes of my early youth strongly to recollection. On inquiry, she told me she had apprenticed her son to a printer ; that till this period she had fed, clothed, and educated him by her own industry ; and that he was now likely to be no longer burthensome to her, being an apt and industrious boy, and already capable of supplying himself with clothes by his over-work.

I farther learnt, from her discourse, that she lived with a young lady, whom she

she affectionately loved ; and there was something mysterious occasionally in her phrases, that led me to imagine her mistress had been unfortunate. ‘ She had been a kind mistress to her ; she loved her in her heart. Poor young lady ! she did not deserve the mishaps she had met with ; and it was a shame that some men should be so base as they were : but, though all the world should turn their back on her, she would not be so wicked. Poor women were born to be misused, by false-hearted men ; and, if they had no pity for one another, what must become of them ?’

I asked if she had lived with the lady long ? She answered, that first and last she had known her ever since she left Mr. Elford’s service.

‘ What ! Was she of our county ?’

‘ Yea.’

‘ Was I acquainted with her ?’

Mary hesitated, and my curiosity was roused—‘ What was the lady’s name ?’

‘ Miss

‘ Miss Lydia Wilmot.’

‘ Wilmot? Wilmot? Surely, not Miss Wilmot, the niece of the bishop of *****?’

‘ No, no,’ said Mary, ‘a’s not his niece, ‘a has better blood in her veins; thof mayhap ‘a may have had her failings. God help us! who is without ‘em? A bishop? Lord ha’ mercy on us! No Christian soul could have believed there was so much wickedness in the world!’

My impatience increased, and I eagerly demanded—‘ Did she ever live with the bishop?’

Poor Mary knew not what to answer; I perceived her confusion. ‘ Go, Mary,’ said I, ‘ and tell Miss Wilmot that Mr. Trevor presents his compliments to her, and will be glad to speak to her the moment she is at leisure.’

After a little hesitation Mary went, continued up stairs some time, and at last returned with—‘ Miss Wilmot’s compliments :

pliments: she should be glad to see me.'

I hurried to her apartment. My conjectures were too well founded to be false: it was the same Miss Wilmot to whom I had been introduced by the bishop, the sister of the guide of my studies and the friend of my youth. Her embarrassment was considerable, she sunk on the sofa as she curtsied, pointed to a chair, and faintly requested I would sit down.

I exerted myself to assume the tone that should tranquilize her feelings; and by asking and answering my own questions, and endeavouring myself to sustain the conversation, brought her with some little difficulty to join in it.

I was burning to interrogate her concerning the bishop, but was restrained by the fear of wounding her sensibility. I inquired after her brother, but him I found she had not lately seen. I fore-
bore

bore to be minute, but it appeared that they knew not the place of each other's abode. I sat with her an hour; but, notwithstanding my impatience, perceiving she evaded the subject I wished to introduce, and turned the discourse on the common place occurrences of the day. I was too respectful of her delicacy to violate it, and left her with an invitation to drink tea with me the following afternoon, which she accepted.

I saw Mary in the interim, had some discourse with her, and, by several phrases which she once more let fall, was involved in greater perplexity. A person of my family had *ruinated* Miss Wilmot of all hope; she never could have justice and right done her now; that was *unpossable*. But mayhap all things *was* for the best. The base man had shewn that he was not worth having. She was sorry, both on her ladyship's account and mine; but there was no help for

for it. God send him a good end ! but she feared it ! Such wickedness could never prosper.'

This language was totally incomprehensible !—' A person of my family ? The base man ? Sorry on my account ?' What did she mean ?

Mary was afraid she had said too much—' I dare not tell you, dear good Sir,' continued she ; ' only don't you be *cunsarned* ; it is no blame of yours ; you will know soon enough.'

In this uncertainty she left me, impatiently hoping some farther explanation from Miss Wilmot ; of which I was not disappointed. The afternoon came, Mary announced her mistress, we were left alone, and I could no longer forbear expressing my desire of knowing her history.

At first she felt some reluctance, but, when I informed her how much Mary had already told, she sighed deeply, and

said, ' I find, Sir, it is in vain to think of concealment ; I will, therefore, since you desire it, relate the few events that are remarkable in my unfortunate life. I fear they are more blameable than extraordinary ; for, from what I hear and see in this great city, mine are no uncommon misfortunes. I even fear I am hitherto less wretched and guilty than thousands. God only knows for what I am reserved !'

CHAP. IV.

THE STORY OF MISS WILMOT: FAMILY MISFORTUNES: A FATHER'S DEATH: A BROTHER'S DISAPPOINTMENT: INTELLIGENCE THAT ASTONISHES ME: WAKEFIELD CHARACTERIZED: THE DEATH OF MISS WILMOT'S MOTHER; AND THE DREAD OF FATAL CONSEQUENCES: PIETY AND COMPASSION OF A BISHOP: DEEP DESIGNS OF WAKEFIELD: THE GOOD FAITH AND AFFECTION OF A POOR ADHERENT.

MY father was an officer in the army, in which, though he served all his life, he only attained the rank of major. He was twice married, the second time to my mother at the age of thirty, by whom he had five children, who, except my brother and myself, did not arrive at maturity. Being reduced to the income of half-pay, they retired into their native county, where they lived with such strict œconomy that they contrived to educate

us better perhaps than the children of people of much larger fortune.

‘ My brother was the eldest child, and I the youngest, so that there was an interval of fifteen years between us. My father had been well educated, loved letters, and undertook to be my brother’s instructor himself to the age of fourteen. At this period my brother was admitted a chorister at the cathedral of ———, at which city my parents had fixed their residence. They were respected by all the inhabitants, whose wealth, birth, and pride, did not place them at too great a distance; and it was a severe mortification to be unable to provide better for their son; but there was no remedy.

‘ The disappointments of my father’s life had given him a melancholy cast, with an aptitude to be dissatisfied; and this propensity was strongly communicated to my brother. The danger of a war between England and Spain called

my father up to town, in the hope of being once more put on actual service. But in this his hopes again were frustrated; and expence without benefit was incurred. Early, however, in the American war, he obtained his wishes; unhappily obtained them, for, having been long unused to the baneful severity of camps, he and many more brave men were carried off, by the damps of the climate to which he was sent. This happened when I was but nine years old; and my mother was left with what little their œconomy had collected, and such scanty provision as is made for officers widows.

‘ My brother, however, who was truly affectionate, and active in efforts to protect us, afforded my mother some aid. From being a chorister, he had gained admission into the grammar-school; of which, while he remained there, he was the pride and boast. Immediately after our father’s death, from the recommen-

dation of his own merit and the misfortunes of the family, he was appointed a Latin usher in the same school ; in which station he remained five years. The difference of our age made him consider himself something rather like a father than a brother to me : he loved me tenderly, took every method to improve and provide for me, and expected in return something like parental obedience. The manners of my mother were of the mild and pleasing kind, with which qualities she endeavoured to familiarize me, and the behaviour of the whole family gained general approbation and esteem.

‘ My brother was deeply smitten with the love of letters : his poetical essays were numerous, many of them were sent up to London and readily admitted into periodical publications.

‘ Anxious to place his family in that rank which he had been taught to suppose it deserved, for my father and mother

ther were both, though not noble, well born, he did not rest satisfied with these attempts : he wrote a tragedy, and, by the advice of people who pretended to have a knowledge of such affairs, determined to go to London, that he might, if possible, get it on the stage. From this my mother would fain have dissuaded him, but his arguments and importunity at length prevailed. He was then but nine and twenty, and I fourteen.

• I could ill describe to you the state of anxiety and suspense in which his various literary efforts involved him, while he remained in London : but in about two years he returned to the country, despairing of that pleasure, profit, and fame, which hope had delusively taught him to consider as his due. This was the period at which he once more became an usher of the school where you were educated. This too was the period at which my misfortunes began.

‘And now, Mr. Trevor, I am coming to events in which you, without any knowledge or interference of your own, may be said to be a partaker.’

She paused a moment: and I, with amazement, doubt, and increasing ardour, requested she would proceed.

‘The name of Wakefield must certainly be familiar to you?’

‘It is: I am sorry to say it is the name my mother at present bears.’

‘If you feel sorrow, Mr. Trevor, what must my feelings be? Mine! who, had there been truth or honour in man, ought to have borne that name myself. Mine! who, when I first heard of your mother’s marriage, should not have felt so severe a pang had a dagger been struck to my heart. Mine! who from that moment, or rather from the fatal and guilty moment when I confided in an unprincipled man, have never known that cheerfulness and peace, which once were the inmates of my bosom!’

‘You

‘ You astonish me, madam ! Wakefield ?’

‘ Wakefield ! Him have I to thank for loss of self-respect, a brother’s love, and perhaps a parent’s life ! I was my mother’s companion, consolation, and pride. How can I estimate a mother’s grief ? She died within a year. Have I not reason to believe her days were shortened by her daughter’s guilt ?’

The pain of recollection was agonizing. She burst into a flood of tears : nor could every effort she made keep down the deep sobs that for some minutes impeded speech. I used every endeavour to appease and calm her mind : she seemed sensibly touched by that sympathy which intensely pervaded me ; and, as soon as she could recover herself, thus continued.

‘ The kind part you take in my affliction, Mr. Trevor, affords me greater relief than any that perhaps I have felt for years. It is true the faithful Mary,

good creature, has almost shed tear for tear: but she herself is the daughter of misfortune, and from her, though grateful, it is something like expected. You are a man; you perhaps have been accustomed to the society of those whose pleasure is the most exquisite when they can most contribute to the miseries of woman: that you should be virtuous enough to condemn such instruction, does more than sooth feelings like mine: and I think we esteem benefits the more the less we expect them.'

'But where, madam, did you first meet with Mr. Wakefield?'

'In the city of ——— where he was bred, under his father, to the profession of the law. From what I have seen of you, and from what I have heard of your talents and understanding, I should have expected you to have been the child of extraordinary parents; otherwise, I do not much wonder at your mother's conduct, superior as she was to Mr. Wakefield

field in years ; for, of all the men I ever saw, he is the most deceitful, plausible, and dangerous. Neither man nor woman are safe with him ; and his arts are such as to over-reach the most cautious. He has words at will ; and his wit and invention, which are extraordinary, are employed to entrap, humiliate, degrade and ruin all with whom he has intercourse. His ambition is to gratify his desires, by triumphing over the credulity of the unsuspecting, whom he contemns for their want of his own vices. It was he that, after having seduced me, placed me in the family of the bishop, laid the plan that I should pass for his lordship's niece, by various falsehoods cajoled me to acquiesce (the chief of which was, that the project was but to save appearances, till he could make me his wife) left me in that unworthy prelate's power, then, returning to the country, plotted the marriage with your mother, and, by his intimate knowledge of the weakness or vice
of

of each character, which he seems to catch instinctively, adapted his scheme with such cunning to the avarice of his uncle as to gain his concurrence and aid.

‘ It was my clandestine departure at this period, and the rumours and suspicions to which it gave birth, that again drove my brother from the country. For some months neither he nor my mother knew what was become of me.

‘ At length her decline, and the extreme affliction of dying and never hearing of me more, occasioned her to prevail on my brother to advertise me in all the papers. This he did, by inserting the initials of my name, and such other tokens as he knew must be intelligible to me, should I read the advertisement; informing me at the same time of the dying state of my mother.

‘ His plan so far succeeded as to come to my knowledge. I read the paper, was seized with horror at the information,
and

and immediately wrote in answer. It was too late ! My mother was dead ! and I left in that state of distraction to which by a single moment's weakness I had been thus fatally conducted !

' Grief, despondency, and resentment, took firm possession of my brother's mind. He wrote me a dreadful letter of the state of his feelings ; and, though he forebore explicitly to accuse me of my mother's death, I could perceive the thought pervaded his mind. After her funeral, he came up to London ; but refused all intercourse with me, once excepted. A few days only after that on which the bishop introduced you to me, he came, knocked at the door, inquired if I were at home, and sent up his name.

' Of all the moments of my life, that was the most awful ! A death-like coldness seized me ! The sound of my brother's name was horror ! I know not what I said to the servant, but the feelings of Mr. Wilmot were too racking for

for delay : he was presently before me, dressed in deep mourning ; I motionless and dead ; he haggard, the image of despair ; so changed in form that, but for the sharp and quick sighted suspicions of guilt, had I met him, I should have passed him without suspecting him to be my brother.

‘ I can tell you but little of what passed. His sentences were incoherent, but half-finished, and bursting with passion that was neither grief nor rage, nor reproach nor pardon, though a mixture of them all. The chief impression that he left upon my mind was, that he should soon be freed from the torment of existence : not by the course of nature ; he complained, with agony, that labour, disappointment, injustice, and contamination itself could not kill him ; but die he would !

‘ From that day to this, I have never seen or heard word of him more. The deep despair with which he uttered his
last

last resolution has kept me in a state of uninterrupted terror. I daily read all the papers I can buy or borrow with the excruciating dread, every paragraph I come to, of catching his name, and, Oh ! insufferable horror ! reading an account of his death !

‘ My state of being seems wholly changed ! I am no longer the same creature ! My faculties, which formerly compared to those of my brother I thought slow even to stupidity, are now awakened to such keenness of discernment that the world is multiplied upon me a million fold ! Sometimes it is all intelligence, though of a dark and terrific hue ; at other moments objects swarm so thick that they dance confusion, and give me a foretaste of madness, to which I have now a constant fear that I shall be driven. My own deep shame, the loss of the man whom like an idiot I dearly loved, my mother’s death, my brother’s letter, and particularly his last visit, have altogether

gether given such an impetuosity to my thoughts as I want the power to repel. Whither they will hurry me God only knows. At one interval I imagine the earth contains nothing but evil! At another, strange to tell! all is good! all is wise! all harmonious! and I reproach my own extreme folly for wanting happiness under so perfect a system!

‘Nay, there are times in which I persuade myself I have been guilty of no crime! that there is no such thing as crime! and that the distinctions of men are folly, invented by selfishness and continued by ignorance!’

‘Indeed, I know not whither my thoughts do not range. At one moment, I seem as if I were actually free to penetrate the bowels of the earth, dive into the deep, transport myself with a wish from planet to planet, or from sun to sun, endure all extremes, overcome them, master all resistance, and be myself omnipotent! The very next instant, per-
haps,

haps, I doubt if I have really any existence! if waking and dreaming be not the same thing! and whether either of them are defineable or intelligible! At this very moment, I know not whither my thoughts are wandering! or whether I ought not to snatch up this or the other weapon of death, and instantly strike you breathless, for having dared to listen to my shame!’

While she spoke, her eyes sparkled, and flashed with that wildness which her tongue with such rapid imagery pictured forth. Had it continued, the tumult might have been dangerous; perhaps fatal; but fortunately the firmness and intrepidity of my mind were equal to the scene. With a cool and collected benevolence of look, and with a determined though not severe tone of voice I said: ‘My dear Miss Wilmot, be calm; pause a moment; recollect yourself; I am your friend, I hope you will never find another man your foe.’

The

The idea suggested an opposite association to her active thoughts ; in an instant the fire vanished, her eyes were suffused, her features relaxed, and she again burst into tears and sobs. I was careful not to interrupt the tide of passion ; it gave relief ; and she presently became more calm. Desirous as I was of hearing particulars concerning the bishop, I gladly listened when, after a sufficient pause, she thus resumed her tale.

‘ You must not wonder, Mr. Trevor, that I do not tell my story in a connected manner. Whenever I think on the subject, the incidents I have related press upon my mind, produce sensations I cannot command, and for a time obliterate less momentous circumstances.

‘ The part which the bishop acted in this tragic drama is what I have yet to relate. Mr. Wakefield’s father, who let me here remark was an unprincipled man and died insolvent, happened professionally,

professionally, as a lawyer, to have certain temporalities, in the county where he resided, to manage for the bishop. This brought his son acquainted with the character of the prelate. The relationship in which I stood to him'—I interrupted her.

'To whom, madam?'

'The bishop.'

'I understood he was no relation of yours?'

'He is and is not.'

'Pray explain.'

'He is by marriage, twice removed; not the least by blood. His late lady, a widow when he married her, was the half-sister of my father's first wife; so that by the courtesy of custom he is called my uncle. He is too artful not to have a shelter for his proceedings.—She continued:

'An adept which as I have before said Mr. Wakefield is, in reading the weak and vicious inclinations of the human heart,

heart, he hoped not only to have rid himself of importunity from me, but, by rendering me subservient to this unholy bishop's vile propensities, to have played a deeper game. This is his delight. The pleasure he receives in making other men's follies, passions, and vices, administer to his own, is the greatest he knows. Were he but the cunningest man on earth, he would think himself the greatest.

‘ His character sympathized with that of the bishop, who was happy to find so artful and so active an agent. It was not till I had been in the prelate's family some time that the whole of their design was explained to me. The bishop frequently used strange, and to me unintelligible expressions; disgusting from any man, but from him inexpressively offensive and odious; yet the full import of them I did not so much as suspect.

‘ Nor did he omit to make the solemnity

lemnity of his supposed character an abettor to his hypocrisy. Feelings of compassion, moral affection, and christian forgiveness were assumed. When I first entered his house he gave me to understand that he was acquainted with my crime; this, after mentioning it as a serious sin, affecting pity, he qualified away, and, as people in all such situations must, talked an incoherent jargon; that God hated and loved such sinners; that religion was all powerful, but that man was frail; that Christ died to save us, and therefore though we should fall, as perhaps the best of us were subject to back slidings, his mercy was all sufficient.

‘ But on this and every occasion, he was careful to say nothing open and direct, by which he should be detected. If ever he ventured so far as to excite serious questions from me, he was ever ready with evasive answers, and had something like reasoning to offer, in defence

fence of his own manners and in ridicule of prudery. He began with caution, but when he had accustomed me to such discourse, and after I had heard it repeated even in the presence of his clerical companions, of which you, Mr. Trevor, were once a witness, my surprise wore away; the pain it gave me was diminished, and he became less and less reserved.

‘ Still however he did not venture openly to declare himself; and Mr. Wakefield was too busy, in wasting your mother’s fortune and gratifying his own desires, to attend to those of the bishop. But his prodigality, which is excessive, after a time brought him to London; and the bishop imagined that, with his help, my scruples would at last be conquered.

‘ The trial was made; not by the cautious bishop, but by Mr. Wakefield. How such a proposition, coming from the man whom I had dearly loved,

and whose wife in justice I considered myself to be, was received, you, who have a sense of the feelings of a highly injured and justly indignant heart, may conceive !

‘ Yet, impassioned determined and almost frantic as I was, it was with difficulty he could relinquish his plan. Till that hour, I never believed him so utterly devoid of principle ; but he then laid bare his heart, hoping to make me a convert to its baseness. He exulted in the power we should obtain over this sensual prelate, and the sums which by these means we might extort. He looked with transport forward, to the opening which this would afford for projects still much deeper. The vices of the great, with which he might thus become intimate, afforded a field ample as his own vice could wish. Nor could all the impatience of indignation, with which I continually interrupted him, impede that flow which the subject inspired.

‘ At

‘ At length, disgusted beyond sufferance, I abruptly left him, and sought relief from the racking sensations which he had excited. He then entered into a correspondence with me, till I threatened to shew his letters to the bishop. This induced him to desist, and for some time I heard from him no more. At last he wrote once again, informing me that you, Mr. Trevor, were come to London; characterizing you as ignorant of the world and easily deceived; telling me that you were intimate with the bishop; and advising me to promote a plan of marriage between us, which he had proposed to the prelate as the best way, in his own phrase, of making all things smooth!

‘ I hope the deep shame I felt, when the bishop introduced you and made the experiment, was sufficiently visible to convince you how repugnant my feelings were to such a crime!

The bishop finding his first purpose
thus

thus defeated, and himself encumbered by a kind of claimant, which his acknowledging me as a niece had brought upon him, was determined at all events to rid himself of me. Immediately before he left town, he wrote me a letter, telling me that my loss of character was become too public for me to receive any further countenance, from a man under the moral and divine obligations which every bishop of the church of Christ must be; that he was going on a visit to his diocese; that he could not think of taking me, it was too flagrantly improper; and that he advised and expected I should immediately return to my relations; further hoping that I should see the enormity of my conduct, and reform.

‘ Oh ! Mr. Trevor, what a world is this ! Had he offered me money, I should have rejected it with disdain ! but he had not even that much charity. I

instantly quitted the house with a few shillings only in my pocket.

‘ Mary had lived with me and my mother for some years before my elopement : after my mother’s death, my residence in the bishop’s family being known, I sent for her up to town and hired her. Her artless affection made her my confidante ; my situation required it ; and, when she heard the bishop’s letter read, the kind creature with honest anger instantly went and gave him warning.

‘ A quarter’s wages was all her wealth ; for the earnings of her labour she had constantly expended on her boy, for whom she seems to have more than a mother’s affection. She has been my constant comforter. Seeing the tears in my eyes, as we left the bishop’s house, with a look of mingled pity and indignation she exclaimed—‘ Do not grieve, dear madam ; though I work my fingers to the bone, you shall not want.’

Miss Wilmot was proceeding with her narrative, when she was interrupted by the hasty entrance of Mary. 'Oh madam,' said she, 'the dear young lady and her maid are below. They were coming up stairs, but I told them that you had a gentleman with you! Whereof at which the young lady seemed a little in amaze; till I gave her to know that it was only a friend of your brother's, a person from our own honest country, and she would then be gone away, but as I said I was sure you would be glad to see her, and would go up a purpose to your own room. So do you go, madam, and I'll run down and tell her.'

Miss Wilmot immediately took her leave; and, though my curiosity was a little awakened, a sense of decorum would not suffer me to endeavour to see her visitor. I therefore shut the door, and, as soon as all was silent on the stairs, I took my hat and walked out; that by

changing the scene I might dissipate a part of the melancholy which her story had produced.

CHAP. V.

ANGER UNABATED : MORE NEWS OF THE BISHOP ;
DELIBERATION ON THE MODE OF MY RE-
VENGE : THE ARTICLES ANSWERED ; AND NEW
ASSAILING DOUBTS : A VISIT TO TURL : AD-
VICE GIVEN AND REJECTED : AND FORMER
FEELINGS REVIVED.

THE next morning, when I came to reflect on all that I had heard, I was surprised with the degree in which, by my mother's marriage with Wakefield, I appeared to be implicated in the history. The character of Wakefield, his prodigality, and total want of principle, were all of a dangerous cast. Not satisfied with beggaring my mother, he had projected to marry me to his mistress. The recollection of him roused resentment,

and cunning and inventive as he was described to be, I wished for an opportunity of punishing his baseness, teaching him his own insignificance, and treating him with the contempt he deserved. If attacked, I had not yet learned the philosophy of forbearance. Though I have been hurried forward too fast to narrate every little incident as it occurred, yet it cannot be imagined that I all this while neglected to peruse the defence of the articles published in the bishop's name. No: it was my very first employment, on my arrival in town; and though considerable trouble had been bestowed to disfigure the work, as written by me, yet in substance I found it to be the same. The wrongs of Miss Wilmot quickened my feelings, and, angry as I was with Wakefield, I felt emotions of ten fold bitterness against the bishop.

Association easily conjured up the earl, the president, the tutor, Themistocles,

and the injustice and disgrace I had suffered at Oxford. The fermentation was so great that I was determined, immediately, to expose them to the broad shame that should drive them from human society.

In this benevolent project I was confirmed by another piece of intelligence. One of the rich sees of the kingdom had become vacant. The king's *congè d'elire* was issued, and God's holy vicar the Bishop of * * * * himself was translated. What could I conclude, but that the defence which I had written had been the cause? I had been made the stepping stone of vice! I remembered the proceeding of the despot, Frederic of Prussia, with the immortal Voltaire: the orange had been squeezed, and the rind thrown to rot in the highway!

My teeth gnashed with the abundance of my wrath, and the impotence of my means. I had hitherto forborne to write from a perplexity of different plans. At
one

one moment I determined to address my foes in the public papers ; at another I would concentrate the story, and relate the whole in a pamphlet. Now it should be a history ; anon a satirical novel ; Asmodeus in London, in which I would draw the characters in such perfection that, without mentioning names, the persons should be visible to every eye. But then this would not be sufficiently serious. Thousands might mistake that for fiction which I wished all the world to know was fact. To give them the least shelter was cowardly to myself, treacherous to society, and encouragement to the criminal.

At last, the pamphlet was the mode on which I determined : and it was begun with all the enthusiasm that the accumulating circumstances could not but inspire, in a being constituted like me. Eager after every species of aggravation, my anger could never be hot enough ; the gall of my ink was milk to

that of my heart. The bitterness of my feelings was tormenting ; words that could burn, contempt that could kill, shame that could annihilate, these and nothing less could satisfy me. Could the serpent revenge fly, how would it dart and sting ! Happily for man it can only crawl. That I had been treated with great injustice was true : but of justice my notions were very inadequate ; of revenge I had more than enough for a nation.

While hot in the pursuit of this task, I was diverted from it by the publication of an answer to the articles. The moment I saw it advertised, not sufficiently habituated to the vice of indolence myself to recollect that I had an idle footman below, I hurried to the publisher's, purchased it, and returned with a greyhound speed to devour its contents.

Disgusted as I was with the members of the church, and beginning even to doubt of the perfect orthodoxy of the church

church itself, I still had too high an opinion of my own arguments to imagine the wit of man could overturn them.

My haste had been so great that I had not taken off the paper, in which the pamphlet was wrapped ; and in the shop I had read no more than the title-page. What was my surprise when snatching it from my pocket and opening it, I discovered, at the conclusion of a short preface, the name of Turl ! it's author !

My emotions were confused. At one moment an answer from him was what I wished ; the next it was something like what I feared. In all argument, I had hitherto found him so cool, so collected, and so clear, that, to my imagination, he perhaps was the only man on earth fit to cope with me. But the grating question, ' Was I fit to cope with him ? ' would now and then recur. I could not but feel that I had, in a certain manner, been subdued and cowed by his greater

extent of knowledge, perspicuity, and masculine genius. By thoughts like these my anxiety, if not my ardour, was increased, and I began to read.

My forebodings were fulfilled. The impotence of my arguments was exposed, their absurdity and self-contradiction ridiculed, their evil tendency demonstrated, their falsehood rendered odious, and the author of them treated like a child. My self respect was wounded at every line, each paragraph was a death stab, and I never before felt myself so completely ridiculous.

As a lesson of philosophy it was the most serious, salutary, and impressive I ever received; for though, while reading, I affirmed to myself that every thing urged against me was weak, or ill founded, inconclusive, or absolutely false, yet the arguments returned with increasing and reiterated force, haunting and oppressing me like a painful dream from which I could not awake.

The

The evil tendency which he proved against my doctrines was the least to be forgotten. As far as I understood myself, I had a sincere love of truth, and an unfeigned desire to benefit, not mislead and oppress, mankind. As the author of the defence, the heavy charge of immorality was brought against me; not by personal attacks on my substitute, the bishop, but by a detail of the consequences of such doctrines.

This event made me pause and consider, though with but little propensity to candour, concerning the pamphlet on which I was then engaged. Consideration however did but seem to confirm me in my purpose. Let my defence be right or wrong, and I had by no means yet decided in the negative, still the turpitude of the bishop and my persecutors was no less flagitious. These incidents once more turned my thoughts toward Turl, whom I knew not whether to admire, love, or hate. I was not so entirely

tirely overwhelmed but that I had arguments, at least I had words, at my command. Beside, I felt a wish to communicate to him my projected attack, and perhaps read a part of my pamphlet, that it might, as it certainly must, meet his approbation. I felt satisfied that what he approved could not be wrong. And how disapprove? On former occasions indeed my hopes, in this respect, had been deceived; but now it was impossible! The case was so clear! In the present instance, there could be but one opinion!

Feelings which were not the most honourable to myself, for their source was egotism, had withheld me from visiting him since my return; but these were now subdued, by others that were more imperious. I was not satisfied with requiring his approbation of my plan of vengeance; my choleric vanity challenged him to the lists, and the combat was resolved upon.

As I was going, I recollected the short-
ness

ness of the period in which his answer had been composed and published, and this did but remind me of the champion I had to encounter.

I found him, as before, tranquilly pursuing his labours; except that now he was writing, engaged as I imagined on the grand work he had projected; though his copper and engraving tools lay dispersed by his side. He received me as usual with calmness, but not without an evident mixture of pleasure. Irritable as my feelings were, I had always experienced something infinitely more dissatisfactory in being angry with him than with any other person. In his countenance there was a sedate undeviating rectitude, that, but for my impetuous disdain of all restraint, would have inspired awe; yet, whenever his eye met the eye of another, there was something so benevolent as almost to disarm ill humour.

Replete with new arguments, as I supposed, but which in reality were only a repetition

repetition of those I had already adduced, I burst upon him with a multitude of words ; defending my own defence of the articles and attacking his answer. He made various ineffectual attempts to arrest my career, and at last was obliged to suffer me to weary myself ; after which he calmly replied.

‘ The best answer I can give, to all you have urged, is to request you will read the defence of the articles and my answer again, with care. Either I am mistaken or you will find every thing you have said already confuted.’

I endeavoured to divert him from this defence by reference, but he continued to urge that he should only weaken his cause by answering desultory arguments in a desultory way ; which in the present case would be folly, because his answer was already given in a clear and as he believed conclusive manner.

Finding his purpose not to be shaken, I asked him if he were aware that I was
the

the author of the defence of the articles ? He answered that, seeing the bishop's name to the publication, he could not but suppose the bishop himself had been intimately concerned in the writing of the work : but, from what I had formerly told him, he had suspected me to be a fellow-labourer.

' If so,' said I, ' Mr. Turl, how did it happen that you felt no aversion to the confutation, as you suppose, of a man for whom you had professed a regard ?'

He replied, ' you, Mr. Trevor, are well acquainted with my answer : " Socrates is my friend, Plato is my friend, but truth is more my friend." If I myself had written falsehood yesterday, and now knew it to be such, I would answer it to day. Would not you ?'

It was a home question, and I was silent.

This subject ended, he made some kind and cordial inquiries concerning my present pursuits, and these furnished the opportunity

opportunity of unburthening my heart. I related to him, with all the indignation which resentment inspired, my whole history; and ended with informing him of my determination to publish the vice and infamy of all the parties to the world. On this a dialogue began.

‘ Which way will you publish them?’

‘ In a narrative, that I am now writing.’

‘ A sense of duty has obliged me to tell you that, in my opinion, you have been guilty of several mistakes already: you are now intent upon another.’

‘ How so?’

The excess of your anger perverts your judgment, and you cannot write such a narrative without keeping your passions in a vitiated state. Owing to the prejudices of mankind, you will impeach your own credibility. Moderate men will think you rash, the precise will call you a detractor, and the partisans, who are numerous, of the persons you will attempt

tempt to expose will raise a cry against you, that will infinitely overpower the equivocal proofs you can produce. It will become a question of veracity, and yours will be invalidated by the improbability, if not of the guilt, at least of the folly of your persecutor's conduct. You cannot reform them, will do yourself much harm, and the world no good. You will not only misemploy your time for the present, but impede your power for the future.'

'If such be the consequences of honestly speaking the truth, what is the conduct that I am to pursue? Am I to be a hypocrite, and listen with approbation while men boast of their vices, glory in their false principles, and proclaim the destructive projects they mean to pursue?'

'No.'

'Is not silence approbation?'

'Yes.'

'Yet

‘ Yet your system will not allow me to speak !’

‘ You accuse my system unjustly : it is the manner of speaking to which it attends. The precaution of speaking so as to produce good, not bad, consequences is the doctrine I wish to inculcate. He that should sweep the streets of peashells, lest old women might break their necks, would doubtless have good intentions ; yet his office would only be that of a scavenger. Speak, but speak to the world at large, not to insignificant individuals. Speak in the tone of a benevolent and disinterested heart, and not of an inflamed and revengeful imagination ! otherwise you endanger yourself, and injure society.’

‘ What, shall any cowardly regard to my own safety induce me to the falsehood of silence ? For is it not falsehood, of the most contemptible and atrocious kind, to forbear publishing such miscreants to the world ? It is this base this selfish prudence,

dence, that encourages men like these to proceed from crime to crime. Had they been exposed in their first attempt, their effrontery could never have been so enormous. No! I am determined! Were my life to be the sacrifice, I will hold them up a beacon, alike to the wicked and the unwary! Will paint them in the gross and odious colours that alone can characterize their actions, and drive them from the society of mankind!

‘Do you conceive you are now speaking in the spirit of justice, or of revenge?’

‘Of both.’

He who is resolved not to be convinced does not wish to hear his last argument answered. With this short reply, therefore, I rose, took my hat, made some awkward apology, was sorry we were fated to differ so continually in principle, but each man must act from his own judgment; was obliged to him nevertheless for his sincerity and good intention,

tion, and once more took my leave, more angry than pleased, much in the same abrupt manner that I had formerly done. The similarity indeed forced itself upon me as I was quitting the door, and I knew not whether to accuse myself of pettishness, obstinacy, and want of candour; or him of singularity, and an inflexible sternness of opposition. At all events, my purpose of publishing my pamphlet as soon as it should be written was fixed; and to that labour I immediately returned.

CHAP. VI.

STORY OF MISS WILMOT CONCLUDED: OLIVIA NOT FORGOTTEN: A GAMING-TABLE FRIEND CHARACTERIZED: MODERN MAGICIANS: SUSPICIOUS PRINCIPLES: THE FRIEND'S ABSENCE, AND RETURN: ALLEGORICAL WIT, AND DANGEROUS ADVICE.

VARIOUS causes induced me to take the first opportunity of again visiting Miss Wilmot;

Wilmot ; her story had inspired compassion and respect. She might be in want, and to relieve her would give me pleasure. Beside which I had a number of questions to ask, especially concerning this Wakefield ; and some desire to know who and what the young lady, who was so great a favourite with Mary, might be.

In the evening I saw Miss Wilmot ; and, in her offering with as much delicacy as possible pecuniary aid, she informed me that fortunately she had found a friend ; generous, beneficent, and tender ; not less prudent than kind ; and, though very young, possessed of a dignity of understanding such as she had never before met in woman. Miss Wilmot spoke with so much enthusiasm that I, whose imagination readily caught fire, felt a redoubled wish to see this angel.

I hinted it to Miss Wilmot, but with apologies ; and she replied that the young lady had expressly requested her visits
might

might be private, and her name concealed. I inquired how they had first become acquainted, and learned that it was in consequence of the friendly zeal of Mary, who had a countrywoman that lived servant in the family of this young lady, and from whom she gained intelligence of the liberal and noble qualities of her mistress. 'The first retreat of Miss Wilmot, after leaving the house of the bishop, was to a poor lodging provided by Mary. From this she was removed by the friendly young lady to her present asylum, till she could find the means of maintaining herself; and had since been supplied with necessaries through the same channel. 'The favours she confers on me,' said Miss Wilmot, 'are not so properly characterised by delicacy, as by a much higher quality; an open and unaffected sensibility of soul; a benevolent intention of promoting human happiness; and an unfeigned heart felt pleasure which accompanies her in the performance of
this

this delightful duty. 'The particulars I have now related,' continued she, 'were all that remained to be told when I was interrupted by Mary, at our last meeting; and you are now acquainted with my whole story.'

Every conversation that I had with Miss Wilmot confirmed the truth of her own remark, that her intellect had been greatly awakened by the misfortunes in which her mistakes had involved her; and particularly by the deep despondency of her brother. He, Wakefield, and the young lady were the continual topics of her discourse; but her brother the most and oftenest. I was several times a witness that the papers were daily perused by her, with all those quick emotions of dread which she had so emphatically described. The terror of his parting resolution was almost too much for her, and it was with difficulty she preserved her mind from madness. I saw its tendency, and took every opportunity to sooth

sooth and calm her troubled spirit; and my efforts were not wholly ineffectual.

In the mean time I did not forget that I was not possessed of the purse of Fortunatus. On the contrary, I had a mighty task before me. The image of Olivia incessantly haunted me. The ineffable beauty of her form, the sweet and never to be forgotten sensibility that she displayed when I first saw her in the presence of Andrews, at Oxford, and the native unaffected dignity of her mind were my constant themes of meditation. Must I behold her in the arms of another? The thought was horror! Yet how to obtain her? If I studied the law, preliminary forms alone would consume years. From the church I was banished. A military life I from principle abhorred; even my half ripe philosophy could not endure the supposition of being a hireling cut-throat. Literature might afford me fame, but of riches gained from
that

that source there was scarcely an example.

From literary merit however men had obtained civil promotion; it must not therefore be neglected. Of such neglect indeed my passionate love of letters would not admit. With respect to law, though infinitely too slow for the rapidity of my desires, still it was good to be prepared for all events. I therefore entered myself of the Temple, and thus began another snail-pace journey of term keeping.

Youth is a busy season, and, though occupations are forced upon it of a nature too serious for its propensities, it fails not to find time for amusement. In St. James's-street, near the palace, was a billiard-table, to which when an inmate with Lord Idford I had resorted. It was frequented by officers of the Guards, and other persons who were chiefly supposed to be men of some character and fashion. Among them I had met a young gentleman

man of the name of Belmont, remarkable for the easy familiarity of his address, an excellent billiard player, and who had in a manner attached himself to me, by a degree of attention that was engaging. I thought indeed that I discovered contradictory qualities in him; but the sprightliness of his imagination, and the whimsicality of his remarks, compensated for a looseness of principle, which was too apparent to be entirely overlooked.

He frequently turned the conversation on the county of which I was a native, having, as he informed me, and as his discourse shewed, many acquaintance in that county. Since my return to town I had again met him, and he had sought my company with increasing ardour.

Flattered by this preference, and often delighted with the flights of his fancy, I returned his advances with great cordiality. His appearance was always genteel, but from various circumstances I collected that he was not at present rich.

His

His expectations, according to his own account, were great ; and his familiar habits of treating every man, be his rank or fashion what it might, seemed to signify that he considered himself their equal.

When we first met, after my return to town, he was desirous I should relate to him where I had been, and what had befallen me : and when he heard that I had visited the county of ——— he became more pressing to know all that had happened. To encourage me, he gave me the following account of himself.

‘ For my own part, Mr. Trevor, I am at present under a cloud. I shall sometime or another break forth, and be a gay fellow once again : nor can I tell how soon. I love to see life, and I do not believe there is a man in England of my age, who has seen more of it. Perhaps you will laugh when I tell you that, since we last parted, I have been *vagabondizing*. You do not understand the term ?

It offends your delicacy? I will explain.'

He saw he had raised my curiosity, and with a loquacity that sat easy on him, and a vivacity of imagery in which as I have said he excelled, he thus continued.

'Perhaps you will think a gentleman degraded, by having subjected himself to the denomination of a vagrant? Though, no; you have wit enough to laugh at gray-beards, and their ridiculous forms and absurd distinctions. Know then, there is a certain set or society of men, frequently to be met in straggling parties about this kingdom, who, by a peculiar kind of magic, will metamorphose an old barn, stable, or out-house, in such a wonderful manner that the said barn, stable, or out-house, shall appear, according as it suits the will or purpose of the said magicians, at one time a prince's palace; at another a peasant's cottage; now the noisy receptacle of drunken clubs

cluos and wearied travellers, called an inn; anon the magnificent dome of a Grecian temple. Nay, so vast is their art that, by pronouncing audibly certain sentences which are penned down for them by the head or master magician, they transport the said barn, stable, or out-house, thus metamorphosed, over sea or land, rocks, mountains or deserts, into whatsoever hot, cold, or temperate region the director wills, with as much facility as my lady's squirrel can crack a nut. What is still more wonderful, they carry all their spectators along with them, without the witchery of broomsticks.

‘ These necromancers, although whenever they please they become princes, kings, and heroes, and reign over all the empires of the vast and peopled earth; though they bestow governments, vice-royalties, and principalities upon their adherents, divide the spoils of nations among their pimps, pages, and parasites, and give a kingdom for a kiss, for they

are exceedingly amorous ; yet, no sooner do their sorceries cease, though but the moment before they were reveling and banqueting with Marc Antony, or quaffing nectar with Jupiter himself, it is a safe wager of a pound to a penny that half of them go supperless to bed. A set of poor but pleasant rogues ! miserable but merry wags ! that weep without sorrow, stab without anger, die without dread, and laugh, sing, and dance to inspire mirth in others while surrounded themselves with wretchedness.

‘ A thing still more remarkable in these enchanter is that they completely effect their purpose, and make those who delight in observing the wonderful effects of their art laugh or cry, condemn or admire, love or hate, just as they please ; subjugating the heart with every various passion : more especially when they pronounce the charms and incantations of a certain sorcerer called Shakspeare,

speare, whose science was so powerful that he himself thus describes it.

————— “ I have oft be-dimm’d
The noon-tide sun, call’d forth the mutinous
winds,
And ’twixt the green sea and the azur’d vault
Set roaring war : to the dread rattling thunder
Have I given fire, and rifted Jove’s stout oak
With his own bolt : the strong-bas’d promon-
tory
Have I made shake ; and by the spurs pluck’d
up
The pine and cedar : graves, at my command,
Have wak’d their sleepers ; op’d, and let them
forth
By my so potent art.”

‘ I understand you,’ said I ; delighted with the picture he had drawn. ‘ Your necessities have obliged you to turn player ?’

‘ Not altogether my necessities,’ answered he : ‘ it was more from a frolic, and to know the world. That is my study, Mr. Trevor. But can you tell me why players, by following their profession, act

in some places contrary to all law, and are called strollers, vagabonds, and vagrants, and in others are protected by the law, and dignified with the high and mighty title of his Majesty's Servants?'—

'Indeed I cannot,' said I.

He continued: 'Mark my words; the day will come, Mr. Trevor, when you will discover that there are greater jugglers in the world than your players, wonderful as their art of transformation is. The world is all a cheat; its pleasures are for him who is most expert in legerdemain and cajolery; and he is a fool indeed who is juggled out of his share of them. But that will not I be.'

He then turned the conversation to me, and what had happened during my visit in the country. I was beginning my short narrative, but we were interrupted by an acquaintance, who joined us; and we two or three times met again

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in the billiard-room, before any opportunity presented itself.

One evening however he followed me out, and required me to discharge my promise. Accordingly I told him all that had occurred; but not without those feelings of indignation which the subject always awakened. He rather seemed diverted than to sympathize in my angry sensations, and asked me 'whether I thought those men, whom the world call swindlers, black-legs, and other hard names, were not at least as honest as many of their neighbours?'

He paid most attention to my mother's story; and, I having characterized Wakefield according to the traits my mother and Miss Wilmot had given me, he observed that 'this Wakefield must certainly be a cunning fellow, and of no mean abilities.'

'In my opinion,' I replied 'he is an unprincipled scoundrel; and indeed a greater fool than knave; for, with the

same ingenuity that he has exerted to make all mankind his enemies, he might have made them all his friends.'

Belmont's answer was remarkable. 'You have this ingenuity yourself, Mr. Trevor; talents which you have exerted, in your own way. Have you made all men your friends?'

I was silent, and after a moment's pause he added—'Come, come! You have spirit and generosity; I will tell you how you can serve me. I have a relation, from whom I could draw a good supply at this moment, if I had but a small sum for travelling expences. Lend me ten guineas: I will be back in a week and repay you.'

The pleasantness of his humour, and the manner in which he had gained upon me, were sufficient to insure him a compliance with this request. I had the money in my pocket, gave it him, and we bade each other adieu; with a promise on his part that 'he would soon be

in

in town again, new moulted and full of feather.'

I must not omit to notice that, having had occasion to hint at Miss Wilmot, in the story I had told him, but without mentioning her name, which he never indeed seemed desirous to know, he put many questions relating to her. He inquired too concerning her brother; and, though he gave no tokens of deep passion, was evidently interested in the whole narrative. His queries extended even to the bishop, and the earl; and he discovered a great desire to be minutely informed of all that related to me. His interrogatories were answered without reserve, for I understood them as tokens of friendship.

In less than a fortnight, I met him again, at the usual place: for he had always been averse to visit me at my lodgings. This I had attributed to motives of vanity; for example, his not having apartments perhaps, such as he wished,
to

to invite me to in return. His appearance, the moment I saw him, spoke his success. His dress was much improved, he sported his money freely, and being engaged at play more than once betted ten pounds upon the hazard. He was successful in his match, in high spirits, welcomed me heartily, and was full of those flights in which his vigorous imagination was so happy.

‘Life,’ said he, ‘Trevor,’ putting on his coat after he had done play, ‘life is a game at calculation; and he that plays the best of it is the cleverest fellow. Or, rather, calculation and action are husband and wife; married without a possibility of divorce. The greatest errors of Mrs. Action proceed from a kind of headstrong feminine propensity, which she has to be doing before her husband, Mr. Calculation, has given her proper directions. She often pours a spoonful of scalding soup into his worship’s mouth, before the relative heat between the liquid

quid and the papillary nerves has been properly determined; at which, in the aforesaid true feminine spirit, she is apt, while he makes wry faces, to burst into a violent fit of laughter.

‘Not but that Mrs. Action herself has sometimes very just cause of complaint against her spouse; as most wives have. For example: If, in coming down stairs, Mr. Calculation have made an occasional error but of a unit, and told her ladyship she had only one step more to descend when she had two, she, coming with an unexpected jerk in the increased ratio of a falling body, is very much alarmed; and when the tip of her rose-coloured tongue has happened, on such occasions, to project a little beyond the boundaries prescribed by those beautiful barriers of ivory called her teeth, it has suffered a sudden incision; nay sometimes amputation itself: a very serious mischief;

mischief; for this is wounding a lady in a tender part.

‘What is error? Defect in calculation. What is ignorance? Defect in calculation.’ What is poverty, disgrace, and all the misfortunes to which fools are subject? Defect in calculation.’

By this time we were in the street, walking arm in arm toward the park, and he continued his jocular allegory.—

‘You tell me you have a mind to turn author; and this makes me suspect you understand but little of the algebra of authorship. Could you but calculate the exact number of impediments doubts and disappointments attending the trade, could you but find the sum of the objections which yourself your friends and your employers will raise, not only against your book but against the best book that ever was or will be written, the remainder would be a query, the produce of which would be a negative quantity,
which

which would probably prevent both Sir and Madam from reading either the nonsense or the good sense, the poetry or the prose, the simple or the sublime, of the rhapsodical, metaphorical, allegorical genius, Hugh Trevor: for in that case I suspect Hugh Trevor would find a more pleasant and profitable employment than the honourable trade of authorship. I have read books much, but men more, and think I can bring my wit to a better market than the slow and tedious detail of an A, B, C, manufactory.'

I laughed and listened, and he presently broke forth with another simile.

'In what is the maker of a book better than the maker of a coat? Needle and thread, pen and ink; cloth uncut and paper unsoiled; where is the preference? except that the tailor's materials are the more costly. In days of yore, the gentlemen of the thimble gave us plenty of stay-tape and buckram; the gentlemen

gentlemen of the quill still give us a *quantum sufficit* of hard words and parenthesis. The tailor has discovered that a new coat will sit more *degagé*, and wear better, the less it is incumbered by trimmings : but though buckram is almost banished from Monmouth-street, it is still on sale in Paternoster-row.

‘ I once began to write a book myself, and began it in this very style : Fable, said I, is the cloth, and morality the lining ; a good diction makes an excellent facing, satire ensures fashion, and humour duration ; and for an author to pretend to write without wit and judgment were as senseless as for a tailor to endeavour to work without materials, or shears to cut them. Periods may aptly be compared to buttons ; and button holes are like—

‘ I could find no simile for button holes, and thank heaven ! left off in despair and never wrote another line.

‘ Take my advice, Trevor ; quit all
thoughts

thoughts of so joyless and stupifying a trade! Every blockhead can sneer at an author; the title itself is a sarcasm; and Job, who we are told was the most patient of men, uttered the bitterest wish that ever fell from lips: "Oh that mine enemy had written a book!"

'Beside you are a fellow of spirit, fashion, form, and figure; and if you will but keep company with me may learn a little wit. How many fools are there with full purses, which if you be not as great a fool as any of them, you might find the means to empty? He that is bound by rules, which the rich make purposely to rob the poor of their due, is like crows, scared from picking up the scattered corn by rags and a manikin.'

This discourse gave me no surprise; it was what I imagined to be a free loose mode of talking, that did not correspond with his principles of action. I deemed it a love of paradox, a desire to shew
his

his wit and original turn of thought, and was confirmed in the supposition by his ironical and ludicrous replies, whenever I attempted a serious answer. Such was the history of the beginning of an acquaintance of which the reader will hear more.

CHAP. VII.

**AN IMPORTANT SECRET BETRAYED BY MARY:
TRANSPORTING INTELLIGENCE: THE REVERSE,
OR RAIN AFTER SUNSHINE: THE READER
ENTRUSTED WITH A SECRET: STRANGE BE-
HAVIOUR OF A FALSE FRIEND: LOVER'S
VOWS.**

I DID not suffer a day to pass without either seeing or sending to inquire after Miss Wilmot; so that our intercourse was continual. One afternoon, being in my own room, after hearing as I thought footsteps and female voices on the stairs, Mary knocked at my door, and, enter-
ing

ing as desired, shewed marks of eagerness on her countenance, the meaning of which a question from me immediately caused her to explain. 'Lord! Sir,' said she, 'you cannot think what a hurry and flurry I be in! And all about you!

'Me, Mary?'

'You shall hear, Sir. My mistress is gone out to take a walk in the park, as I *avised* her to *divart* her *mellicholy*; and so the dear young lady has *bin* here; Miss—! I had forgotten! I *munna* tell her name. But if ever there *wur* an angel upon *arth* she is one; she says such kind things to my dear mistress, and does not blame her for her fault; for, *thof* she be as innocent herself as the child unborn, she can pity the *misfortins* of her own *sect*, when they a *bin* betrayed by false hearted men; and all that she says is that we *mun* take care to be more be-cautioned for the time to come: and then she says it in so sweet, and yet so *serys* a manner, that I am sure no christian

christian soul if they'd a heard her would dare do other than as she says. And as for a doing a good turn, I do verily believe she would give the morsel out of her mouth afore a poor creature should be driven to sin and shame for want—'

I interrupted her : she had raised some strong surmises, and I was impatient—
' But you forget, Mary ; you mentioned something concerning me ?'

' Oh lord ! yea ; a mort o' questions a *bin* asked ; for she talks as familiarity to me as if she *wur* a poor body herself ; which gives me heart, so that I be not *afear'd* to speak. Whereof I could not help telling her a great many things about you ; as how, when little more but a child, you saved my life ; and *consarning* your goodness and kind offers to my dear mistress ; and how soft heart-ed and well spoken you *wur* even to poor me ; just for all the world as I said, like her own dear good self. Where-upon it gladdened her heart to hear there

wur

wur another good creature, as good as herself. And so she asked *ater* your name; which, you know that being no secret, I told her, and then it *wur*, if you had but -a seen her! Her face *wur* as pale as my kerchief! and I asked what ailed her ladyship? And she replied in a faint voice, Nothing. So that I thought there must for *sartinly* be a *summut* between you! for she sat down, and seemed to do so! as if a struggling for breath. And I ran for a smelling bottle; whereupon she *wur* better, and said she did not need it. And so she asked how long you had lived in the house, and whether you looked happy? And I answered and said there *wur* not a kinder happier creature breathing. So she asked again if I *wur* quite sure that you *wur* happy? And I said I *wur* *mortally sartin* of it. So then she fetched a deep sigh from the very bottom of her heart, and said she *wur* glad of it, very glad of it indeed. For, said she, my
good

good Mary, for she often calls me good, which I be very sure is her kindness and not my *desarts*, my good Mary, said she, I don't wonder that you do love Mr. Trevor for having a saved your life. He once saved my life; which, says she, I shall remember the longest day I have to breathe: and—'

'It is she!' exclaimed I; for I could hold no longer. 'It is Olivia! Benevolent angel! And does she deign to think of me? Does she inquire after me? Am I still in her thoughts?'

'Anan!' said Mary. 'I hope I a betrayed no secrets? For surely, I ha' not mentioned a word of her name.'

Just as I was continuing to question Mary farther, Miss Wilmot returned. I earnestly requested she would come into my apartment, related the discovery I had made, and spoke with all that enthusiasm which the revival of hope and the ardour of passion could inspire. Miss Wilmot sympathized with my feelings; and,

and, with a fervour that spoke the kindness of her heart, hoped she should one day see a pair so worthy of each other blessed to the full accomplishment of their wishes ; but she confessed she had her fears, for she thought that the remark, that lovers best calculated to make each other happy were seldom united, was but too true.

I prevailed on her to take tea with me ; Mary waited, and I put a thousand questions to her ; for my conversation was all on this subject. I could think of nothing else. O how pure was the delight of this discovery ! That Olivia should quit the scenes of tumultuous joy, and seek the forlorn and unfortunate, purposely to mitigate their wants, and administer consolation to their woes, was knowledge inexpressibly sweet to the soul ! And that she should still remember me ! that my very name should raise such commotions in her bosom ! that she should delight to hear my praise, and

I recollect

recollect the fortunate moment when I bore her from death with such affection! —It was rapture unspeakable!

I learned from Mary that she lived with her aunt, a few streets distant; and Miss Wilmot informed me that she constantly visited her twice, and sometimes oftener, each week. How did my bosom burn with the wish that she might return that very evening, or at least the next day! In the impatience and ecstasy of hope, I forgot all impediments. Let me but see her; let me but know that she was in the house, and I supposed the moment of perfect bliss would then be come. Happy evening! Never did seductive fancy paint more delicious dreams, or raise up phantoms more flattering to the heart.

Pains and pleasures dance an eternal round. The very next day brought sensations of an opposite kind. My mother had found no person of whom to purchase an annuity in the country; for,
the

the money being her own by my free gift, she had not thought proper to venture it with Thornby; lest under the pretext of monies advanced, he should make she knew not what deduction. She had therefore written to me, soon after I came to London, to find her a purchaser; and after some delay, which the necessity of consulting persons better informed than myself had occasioned, I had advertised the week before and had entered into a negotiation.

Terms were agreed upon, and the rough copy of a deed for that purpose was brought me the same morning that the following letter arrived.

‘SIR,

‘In spite of my caution, your mother has played the fool once more. She was too suspicious to trust the money in my hands, though I warned her to beware of accidents. I must say she is a very weak woman. Her husband, Mr. Wake-

field, has made his appearance, and has trumped up some tale or another to impose upon her, which I am sorry to find is no difficult thing. He has got the money you gave her; so what is to become of her I do not know. She expects he will fetch her away within a month, and keep her like a lady, on the profits of some place at court, which, according to his account, a friend was to procure for him if he could but raise five hundred pounds. You may think how likely he is to keep his promise. I told her my mind in plain terms, and I believe she begins to be in a panic. She dare not write to you, on which I thought it best to let you know the truth at once; for, as I said before, what is to become of her I do not know.

I am, &c.

‘NABAL THORNBYS’

The train of ideas which the strange contents of this epistle excited was painful

ful in the extreme. The idiot conduct of my mother tempted me to curse, not her indeed, but, according to the narrow limits of prejudice, God and her excepted, all things else ! Yet, who but she was the chief actor in this scene of lunatic folly ? Was there a woman on earth beside herself that would have been so grossly gulled ?

As for her husband, the bitterness of gall was not so choaking as the recollection of him. The sight or sound of his name excited disgust too intense to be dwelt upon ! To suffocate him as a monster, or a sooterkin, seemed the only punishment of which he was worthy.

And here it is necessary I should inform the reader of a secret, of which I was myself at that time and long continued to remain utterly ignorant. Belmont, the man who had purposely thrown himself in my way, industriously made himself my intimate, informed me as I supposed of his private affairs and motives

tives of action, inquired minutely into mine, wormed every intelligence I could give that related to myself out of me, designedly attached me to him by intellectual efforts of no mean or common kind (for he saw they delighted me, and they were familiar to him) Belmont, I say, possessed of a pleasing person, a winning aspect, and an address that, though studied with the deepest art, appeared to be open, unpremeditated, and too daring for disguise, this Belmont was no other than the hated Wakefield ! Yes, it was Wakefield himself, that by a stratagem which drove me half mad, while it made every drop of blood in his body tingle with triumph, had thus circumvented me ! He it was who borrowed the ten guineas from me, by the aid of which he robbed me of five hundred ; and then returned to observe how I endured the goad, laugh at my restive antics, and revel in the plunder which he had purloined with so much facility from foolish

foolish Trevor, and his still more foolish mother!

But this was not the only trick he had to play me. Secure in the resources of an invention that might have been occupied in pursuits worthy of his powers, his perverted philosophy taught him to employ these resources only for the gratification of passions which he thought it folly to control, and to exult over men whose sordid selfishness he despised, and whose limited cunning was the subject of his derision. He professed himself the disciple of La Rochefoucault and Mandeville, and his practice did not belie his principles.

From the tenor of his discourse, I am persuaded that, had he found me apt at adopting his maxims, he would have unbosomed himself freely, have initiated me in his own arts, and, by making me the associate of his projects, have induced me to look back on the past rather with merriment than anger. As it was,

he reserved himself to act with me as with the rest of mankind ; to watch circumstances, and turn them to his own purposes whenever opportunity should offer.

This was the man who was the hero of the letter I had just received ! A letter that I could neither read nor recollect without being stung almost to frenzy ; yet that I could neither forget nor forbear to peruse !

During two hours I traversed my room, and chafed with something like bursting anguish. A few weeks ago, when I had received my legacy of the lawyer, I seemed to be encumbered with wealth. Reflection and the expence at which I now lived, to the visible and quick consumption of a sum I then thought so ample, had since taught me that I was in imminent danger of being reduced to beggary. I had no profession, nor any means of subsistence till a profession could be secured ; at least no adequate

adequate means, unless by retiring to some humble garret, and confining myself to the society of the illiterate, the boorish, and the brutal, between whose habits and mine there was no congeniality. The very day before, Olivia, ecstatic vision, had risen in full view of my delighted hopes, and, forgetting the tormenting distance which malignant fate had placed between us, I almost thought her mine. The recollection of her now was misery.

Restless, desponding, agonizing, when this thought occurred, I was hastening to go and communicate the accursed news to Miss Wilmot ; but an idea started which, after a moment's reflection, induced me to desist. If I told her, the story of Wakefield must again be revived. Olivia too might be informed of circumstances concerning my silly mother, which, selfishness out of the question, motives of delicacy ought to conceal. Such were my arguments at that time : I had

not then the same moral aversion to secrecy that I now possess.

I could not however any longer endure the present scene, and to get rid of it hurried away to the billiard table, where, as usual, I found the then supposed Belmont. He was not himself at play, but was engaged in betting. Impatient to unburthen my heart, for as far as my own affairs were concerned I had now no secrets for him, I hurried him out of the room immediately that the game was ended.

The moment we came into the park, I shewed him my letter, and desired him to read. While he perused it, I saw he was more than once violently tempted to laugh.

‘Well!’ said he, returning it and restraining his titillation, ‘Is this all?’

‘All!’ answered I. ‘What more would you have? Could the maleficent devil himself do more to drive a man mad?’

He looked in my face! I returned the
inquisitive

inquisitive gaze ! I saw emotions the very reverse of mine struggling to get vent. His opposing efforts were ineffectual ; he could contain himself no longer, and burst into a violent fit of laughter !

Astonished at mirth so ill placed and offensive, I asked what it meant ? The tone of my interrogatory was rousing, and recalled his attention. ‘ Pshaw ! Trevor,’ replied he, with a glance of half contemptuous pity, ‘ you are yet young : you are but at the beginning of your troubles. Your over-weening fondness for the musty morality of dreaming doctards, or artful knaves who only made rules that they might profit by breaking them, will be your ruin. I tell you again and again, if you do not prey upon the world, the world will prey upon you. There is no alternative. What ! be bubbled out of your fortune by a whining old woman ? I am ashamed of you !’

‘ But that woman is my mother !’

‘Yes! and a set of very pretty motherly tricks she has played you! Not that in the first instance it was so much your fault, who were but a boy, as that of your old fool of a grandfather. It is now high time however that you should become a man.’

‘My grandfather? Say rather it was the scoundrel Wakefield!’

‘You seem very angry with this Wakefield! And why? He appears to me to be a fellow of plot, wit, and spirit. Instead of resentment, were I you, I should be glad to become acquainted with the man who so well perceives the stupidity and folly of the animals around him, laughs at their apish antics, and with so much facility turns their absurd whims to his own advantage.’

‘Acquainted! Intuitive rascal! I would cut off his ears! Drag him to the pillory with my own hands! He is unworthy a nobler revenge.’

‘Pshaw! Ridiculous! What did
your

your mother want but the gratification of her paltry passions? which were but the dregs and lees of goatish inclination; for with her the pervading headlong torrent of desire was passed. Did she think of morality? She would have sacrificed the youth and high spirits of Wakefield to her own salacious doating. Why should not he too have his wishes? Were his the most criminal; or the least fitted for the faculties of enjoyment?

‘You have not heard me defend my mother’s conduct: but his villany to the young lady I formerly mentioned [meaning Miss Wilmot] deserves the execration of every man!’

‘That is, as she tells the story. Women; poor simple creatures, are always to be pitied, never blamed! But a little more experience, Trevor, will tell you the devil himself ’is not half so cunning! Men are universally their dupes; nay their slaves, though called their tyrants. Do not men consume their lives in toils
to

to please them ? Who are the chief instigators to what you call vice and folly ? Who are the mischief makers of the world ? Who incite us to plunder, rob, and cut each other's throats ? Who but woman ? And is not a little retaliation to be expected ? Poor dear souls ! Cunning as serpents, Trevor ; but, though fond of cooing, not harmless as doves. Crocodiles ; that only weep to catch their prey. I once was told of one that died broken hearted ; a great beauty, and much bewept by all the maudlin moralizers that knew her. The cause of her grief was a handsome fellow, who of course was a cruel perjured villain. The tale had great pathos, and would have been very tragical, had it but been true. Ages before that in which Jove laughed at them, lover's perjuries were the common topic of scandal, and so continue to be. I have often been reproached in the same way myself, and I once took the trouble to write an apology ;
for

for which, as it will suit all true lovers,
all true lovers are bound to thank me.
Here it is.'

I.

Men's vows are false, Annette, I own :
The proofs are but too flagrant grown.
To Love I vow'd eternal scorn ;
I saw thee and was straight forsworn !

II.

In jealous rage, renouncing bliss,
When Damon stole a rapturous kiss,
I took, with oaths, a long farewell ;
How false they were thou best can'st tell.

III.

By saints I vow'd, and pow'rs divine,
No love could ever equal mine !
Yet I myself, though thus I swore,
Have daily lov'd thee more and more !

IV.

To perjuries thus I hourly swerve ;
Then treat them as they well deserve :
Thy own vows break, at length comply,
And be as deep in guilt as I.

What

‘What think you ; was not this a valid plea ? Are not women apt to take the advice here given them ? Lovely hypocrites ! They delight in being forced to follow their own inclinations !’

There was no resisting the playfulness of his wit, and the exhilarating whim of his manner. My ill humour soon evaporated ; and yielding to the sympathetic gaiety he had inspired, I said to him—
‘You are a wicked wit, Belmont. But, though I laugh, do not imagine I am a convert to your mandevilian system : it is false, pernicious, and destructive of the end which it pretends to secure.’

‘Do not abuse my system, or me either’, replied he. ‘I tell you I am the only honest man of my acquaintance ; and the first effort of my honesty is, as it ought to be, that of being honest to myself.’

‘I hear many men profess the same opinions, but I find them acting on different principles.’

‘You

‘ You mistake. You are young, I tell you. Every man’s actions are strongly tinged by the principles he professes.’

My countenance became a little more serious—‘ Surely you do not avow yourself a rascal ?’

‘ Pshaw ! Epithets are odious. I do not know the meaning of the word ; nor do you.’

Our conversation continued ; it relieved me from a bitterness of chagrin from which I was happy to escape. We dined together. His flow of spirits and rail-lery were unabating ; I combated his opinions, he laughed at my arguments, rather than answered them, and, though I even then conceived him to be a very bad moralist, I thought him a delightful companion.

CHAP. VIII.

REVENGE NOT FORGOTTEN: THE VISIT DELAYED: WILMOT AND HIS POETICAL POWERS: DREADFUL INTELLIGENCE: AN APPALLING PICTURE: A FRUITLESS SEARCH; FOLLOWED BY A SURPRISING DISCOVERY.

STIMULATED by the ridicule of Belmont, though I never had a thought of abandoning my mother to want, still I determined, according to the proverb, to let her bite the bridle. Instead of writing, therefore, I waited till she should write to me.

Mean time my pamphlet was the grand object of present pursuit. When I began it, I imagined it would scarcely have been the work of a day, certainly not of a week. I was deceived. To a man who has any sense of justice, who fears to affirm the thing that is not, yet is determined to be inexorable in revenge, no task is so harrassing as that which I
had

had undertaken. Page after page was written, re-written, corrected, interlined, scratched, blotted and thrown in the fire. The work had been three times finished, and three times destroyed. It was a fourth time begun, and still the labour was no less oppressive, irritating, and thorny.

It was in this state at the time that Mary brought me the joyful intelligence relating to Olivia. I had watched with unremitting assiduity during those hours of the day when she had been accustomed to visit Miss Wilmot ; but my watchings were fruitless ; she came no more.

The fourth day after her last visit, she sent a note to Miss Wilmot, informing her that her aunt was going to Bath for the recovery of her health, to which place it was necessary that she should attend her. The blow was violent, and would have been felt more violently even than it was, had it not been for an event which I must now relate.

The

The alarms of Miss Wilnot concerning her brother had not been lightly excited : they might rather be called prophetic. She had indeed strongly communicated her terror to me. One morning I was meditating on the subject, and recollecting those early days when, gathering the first fruits of genius, I was taught by him to distinguish and enjoy the beauties of its emanations, and the sublimity of its flights. His affection for me, though but a boy, had induced him to give me some short poetical compositions of his own. I was reading them over, with strong feelings, partly of sorrow and partly of indignation, at the folly and injustice of a world that could overlook such merit. One of them in particular, which I had always admired for the simple yet pathetic spirit of poetry in which it was written, I was then perusing. It was the following.

Ho !

I.

Ho! Why dost thou shiver and shake,
Gaffer-Gray!
And why doth thy nose look so blue?
'Tis the weather that's cold;
'Tis I'm grown very old,
And my doublet is not very new,
Well-a-day!

II.

Then line thy worn doublet with ale,
Gaffer-Gray;
And warm thy old heart with a glass.
'Nay but credit I've none;
And my money's all gone;
Then say how may that come to pass?
Well-a-day!

III.

Hie away to the house on the brow,
Gaffer-Gray;
And knock at the jolly priest's door.
'The priest often preaches
Against worldly riches;
But ne'er gives a mite to the poor,
Well-a-day!

IV.

The lawyer lives under the hill,
Gaffer-Gray;

Warmly

Warmly fenc'd both in back and in front.

‘ He will fasten his locks,
And will threaten the stocks,
Should he ever more find me in want,
Well-a-day !’

V.

The squire has fat beeves and brown ale,
Gaffer-Gray ;

And the season will welcome you there.

‘ His fat beeves and his beer,
And his merry new year
Are all for the flush and the fair,
Well-a-day !’

VI.

My keg-is but low I confess,
Gaffer-Gray ;

What then ? While it lasts man we'll live.

The poor man alone,
When he hears the poor moan,
Of his morsel a morsel will give,
Well-a-day !

In that precise state of mind which
associations such as I have described,
and a poem like this could excite, when
I was alike bewailing the madness and
turpitude of mankind, that could be
blind

blind to the worth of a man such as Wilmot, while glowing I say and thrilling with these sensations, my breakfast was brought and with it a paper—! What shall I say?—It contained what follows! “Yesterday a middle aged man, of a genteel and orderly appearance, was seen to walk despondingly beside the Serpentine river. A gentleman, who having met him remarked the agitation of his countenance, suspected his design; and, concealing himself behind some trees at a little distance, watched him, and at last saw him throw himself into the water. The gentleman, who was a good swimmer, jumped in after him; but could not immediately find the body, which after he had brought it out was conveyed to Mary-le-bone watch-house. A few shillings were found in his pocket, but nothing to indicate his name, place of abode, or other information, except a written paper, containing

taining the following melancholy account of himself.

‘ This body, if ever this body should
‘ be found, was once a thing which, by
‘ way of reproach among men, was call-
‘ ed an author. It moved about the
‘ earth, despised and unnoticed; and
‘ died indigent and unlamented. It could
‘ hear, see, feel, smell and taste with as
‘ much quickness, delicacy, and force
‘ as other bodies. It had desires and
‘ passions like other bodies, but was de-
‘ nied the use of them by such as had the
‘ power and the will to engross the good
‘ things of this world to themselves.
‘ The doors of the great were shut upon
‘ it; not because it was infected with
‘ disease or contaminated with infamy,
‘ but on account of the fashion of the
‘ garments with which it was cloathed,
‘ and the name it derived from its fore-
‘ fathers; and because it had not the
‘ habit of bending its knee where its
‘ heart owed no respect, nor the power
‘ of

of moving its tongue to gloze the crimes
or flatter the follies of men. It was
excluded the fellowship of such as heap
up gold and silver ; not because it did,
but for fear it might, ask a small por-
tion of their beloved wealth. It shrunk
with pain and pity from the haunts of
ignorance which the knowledge it pos-
sessed could not enlighten, and guilt
that its sensations were obliged to ab-
hor. There was but one class of men
with whom it was permitted to associ-
ate, and those were such as had feel-
ings and misfortunes like its own ;
among whom it was its hard fate fre-
quently to suffer imposition, from as-
sumed worth and fictitious distress.
Beings of supposed benevolence, capa-
ble of perceiving loving and promoting
merit and virtue, have now and then
seemed to flit and glide before it. But
the visions were deceitful. Ere they
were distinctly seen, the phantoms va-
nished. Or, if such beings do exist,
it

' it has experienced the peculiar hard-
 ' ship of never having met with any, in
 ' whom both the purpose and the power
 ' were fully united. Therefore, with
 ' hands wearied with labour, eyes dim
 ' with watchfulness, veins but half nou-
 ' rished, and a mind at length subdued
 ' by intense study and a reiteration of
 ' unaccomplished hopes, it was driven
 ' by irresistible impulse to end at once
 ' such a complication of evils. The
 ' knowledge was imposed upon it that,
 ' amid all these calamities, it had one
 ' consolation—Its miseries were not eter-
 ' nal—That itself had the power to end
 ' them. This power it has employed,
 ' because it found itself incapable of sup-
 ' porting any longer the wretchedness of
 ' its own situation, and the blindness
 ' and injustice of mankind : and as,
 ' while it lived, it lived scorned and neg-
 ' lected, so it now commits itself to the
 ' waves ; in expectation, after it is dead,
 ' of being mangled, belied, and insulted.'

Oh

Oh God! what were my feelings while reading this heart appalling story! It contained volumes; and sufficiently spoke the strength of the mind that could thus picture its own sensations. It must be my beloved Wilmot: it could be no one else; or even if it were, the man who thus could feel and thus could write was no less the object of admiration, grief, and a species of regret, of the guilt of which every man partook! It was an act of attainder against the whole world, in the infamy of which each man had his share!

Transfixed with horror as I was, I still had the recollection to conceal the paper from the eye of Miss Wilmot, and that instant to go in quest of the body. The utmost speed and diligence were necessary; she must soon hear of the fatal event, and it was much to be dreaded that this would not be the last act of the tragedy.

According to the indication given in

the paper, I went immediately to the watch-house; but was surprised to find that the body was not there. They had heard something of a man throwing himself into the Serpentine river, but could give no farther information.

I then ran to every bone-house and receptacle in the various adjoining parishes; but without success. The only intelligence I could obtain was that the gentleman, who leaped in after the man in order to have saved his life, had taken the body home with him; but no one could direct me where he lived.

The circumstance was distracting! My terrors for Miss Wilmot increased. I knew not what course to pursue. At last I recollected that Turl, from having lived some years in London being acquainted with the manners of the place and possessing great sagacity, might perhaps afford me aid. Personal knowledge of Wilmot he probably had none, for he quitted the grammar school at

*** just before Wilmot became its head usher. But I knew not what better to do, and to this, as a kind of last hope, I resorted, and hastened away to his lodgings.

It may well be supposed my tone of mind was gloomy. For a man like Wilmot, with virtues so eminent, sensations so acute, and a mind so elevated, to be thus impelled to seek a refuge in death was a thought that almost made me hate existence myself, and doubt whether I might not hereafter be driven to the same desperate expedient, to escape the odious injustice of mankind. The distraction too which would seize on Miss Wilmot haunted my thoughts; for I was convinced that the intelligence, whenever it should reach her, would prove fatal.

Full of these dismal reflections, I arrived at the door of Turl, knocked, and was desired to come in. Turl rose as I entered, and with him a stranger, who

had been seated by his side. A stranger, and yet with features that were not wholly unknown to me. He seemed surprised at the sight of me, examined me, fixed his eyes on me ! Memory was very busy ! Associating ideas poured upon me ! I gazed ! I remembered ! Heavens and earth ! What was my astonishment, what were my transports, when in this very stranger I discovered Mr. Wilmot ? Living ! Pale, meagre, dejected, and much altered ; but living !

Turl was the gentleman in the park, who had observed the deep melancholy visible in his countenance ; had fortunately suspected his intention ; had brought him out of the water ; had discovered favourable symptoms ; and, instead of either taking him home or to the watch-house, had conveyed him to St. George's hospital ; where he immediately obtained medical aid, that had preserved his life ! Turl was the person
whose

whose courage, humanity, and wisdom, had prolonged the existence of a man of genius; and who was now exerting all his faculties to render that existence happy to the possessor, and beneficial to the human race! Oh moment of inconceivable rapture! Why are not sensations so exquisite eternal?

CHAP. IX.

I SECURE MISS WILMOT AGAINST THE DANGER
OF FALSE ALARM, AND RETURN TO HEAR
THE HISTORY OF HER BROTHER.

EAGER as I was to contribute all in my power to tranquilize the mind of Mr. Wilmot, to renew my friendship with him, and to learn his history from himself, I yet made but a short stay, and hastened home to his sister. Fortunately the tragic tale had not reached her; and, without relating circumstances that if abruptly told might have excited alarm,

I informed her that I had that moment parted from him, and that now I had found him I should use my utmost endeavour to reconcile him to her once more.

To hear that he was still in being gave an undescribable relief to her mind. It beamed in her countenance, and called up thoughts that soon made her burst into tears.

Having by this information, secured her against the ill effects which might otherwise have followed, I escaped further question from her for the present, by truly telling her I was impatient to return to her brother.

I found the two friends still conversing, for friends and sincere ones they were become. The account given by Wilmot of himself had been taken and sent to the newspaper, without the knowledge of Turl; but he had read it, and it was a sufficient index of the mind of the writer: and the behaviour of Turl through the whole

whole affair, as well as the sentiments he uttered in every breath, were enough to convince Mr. Wilmot of his uncommon worth.

On my return, the latter was defending the right of man to commit suicide; which Turl denied; not on the false and untenable ground of superstition, but from the only true argument, the immoral tendency of the act. He was delicate though decisive in his opposition; and only requested Mr. Wilmot to consider, whether to effect the good of the whole be not the true purpose of virtue? Ought not the good of the whole therefore to be its only rule and guide? If so, can the man, who possesses that degree of activity without which he cannot commit suicide, be incapable of being farther useful to society?

Depressed and gloomy as his state of mind was, Mr. Wilmot testified great satisfaction at our rencontre; and the interest which I unfeignedly took in his wel-

fare soon revived all his former affection for me. My veneration for his virtues, love for his genius, and pity for his misfortunes, tended to calm his still fluttering and agitated spirits. Unfortunate as he himself had been, or at least had thought himself, in his love of literature and poetry, it yet gave him pleasure to find that the same passion was far from having abated in me. He called it a bewitching illusion; Turl affirmed it was a beneficial and noble propensity of soul.

We none of us had a wish to separate, for the imagination of each was teeming with that sedate yet full flow of sentiment which, as Milton has so beautifully described, melancholy can give. Mr. Wilmot had supposed his sister was guilty with the bishop; and when I told her story, with the addition of such probable circumstances as I myself had collected, it afforded him very considerable relief

relief to find that the suspicions to which appearances gave birth had been false.

I did not conceal the desire I had to know by what train of accidents he had been led into a state of such deep despondency; and he thus kindly gratified my wish.

HISTORY OF MR. WILMOT.

‘The narrative given by my sister, which you, Mr. Trevor, have already repeated, precludes the necessity of any detail concerning my origin. Nor is origin in my opinion of the least moment, except as it displays the habits and growth of mind, and shews how the man became such as we find him to be. At what period of my existence that activity of inquiry, and those energetic aspirings began, which to me were afterward the source of the extremes of joy and sorrow, I cannot tell; but I believe the quality

of ardour, though probably not born with us, is either awakened in early infancy or seldom if ever attains strength and maturity. I could not only read with uncommon accuracy and ease, while very young, but can remember I made efforts to reason with my father, the major, on what I read, when I was little more than six years old.

‘ He, though a man rather of irritable feelings than profound research, was not destitute of literature ; and encouraged a propensity in me that was flattering to himself, as the father of a boy remarked for his promising talents ; which talents he supposed might lead to distinctions that he had been unsuccessfully ambitious to obtain.

‘ He considered himself as one of the most unfortunate of men. Imagining personal bravery to be the essence of the military character, he had eagerly cherished that quality ; and, having given incontestible proofs that he possessed it

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in an eminent degree, to be afterward overlooked was, in his judgment, too flagrant an instance of public as well as private ingratitude to be ever pardoned. It was the daily subject of his thoughts, and theme of his discourse; and I have great reason to conjecture that the habitual discontent that preyed upon his mind, and embittered his life, especially the latter part of it, communicated itself to me. I was educated in the belief that the world is blind to merit, continually suffers superior virtue to linger in indigence and neglect, and is therefore an odious, unjust, and despicable world.

‘ I own I have at some few intervals doubted of this doctrine; and supposed in conformity to your opinion, Mr. Turl, that failure is rather the consequence of our own mistakes, impatience, and efforts ill directed, than of society: but the ill success of my own efforts, aided perhaps by the prejudices which I received from my father, have preponderated; and
made

made me it may be too frequently incline to melancholy, and misanthropy. What can be said? Are not the rich and powerful continually oppressing talents, genius, and virtue? Is the general sense of mankind just in its decisions?

‘ Beside, an appeal to the general sense of mankind is not always in our power; and that the proceedings of individuals are often flagrantly unjust cannot be denied. In the school where I was educated I was a frequent and painful witness of honours partially bestowed; and prizes and applause awarded to others, that were indubitably due to me. When the rich and the powerful visited the seminary, the sons of the rich and the powerful gained all their attention. Conscious as I could not but be of my own superior claims, I was overlooked!

‘ Perhaps I felt the repetition of these and similar acts of injustice too severely. Yet, are they not odious? I own the remembrance of them ever has been, and is,

is, intensely painful ; and the pain is almost unremittingly prolonged by what every man, who is not willfully blind, must daily see passing in the world. [Mr. Wilmot sighed deeply] Well well ! Would I could forget it !

‘ After many a bitter struggle in my boyish years to rise into notice, few, very few indeed, of which were effectual, I still continued the combat. In due time, as I was told, my efforts were amply rewarded ! But how ? Instead of being forwarded in those more noble and beneficial pursuits for which I think I had proved myself fitted, the effusions of genius though known were never once remembered. Oh, no ! I obtained, with great difficulty and as an unmerited favour, a charitable condescension of power that knew not very well if it ought to be so kind to a being so unprotected, yes, I obtained—the office of usher ! The honour of mechanically hearing declensions, conjugations, and rules of
syntax

syntax and prosody, repeated by beings who detested the labour to which they were compelled, was conferred upon me ! beings who looked on me, not as a benefactor, but as a tyrant ! And tyrants all teachers indubitably are, under our present modes of education.

‘ Humbled and cowed as my genius was, by the drudgery and obscurity to which it was consigned, I yet had the courage to continue those labours by which alone mind is brought to maturity. Alive as I was to a sense of injustice, I recollected that, even if my powers were equal to all that I myself had fondly hoped from them, there were examples of men with at least equal powers, who had been equally ill treated. Equally did I say ? Oh Otway ! Oh Chatterton ! What understandings, what hearts, had those men who without an effort, without moving a finger (not to do you justice, of that they were incapable, but) to preserve you from famine, could suffer you

you to perish? It was needless to repine! I consoled and reconciled myself to my fate as well as I was able. I pursued my studies, read the poets of ancient and modern times with unabating avidity, observed the actions and inquired into the motives of men, and made unceasing attempts to develope the human heart.

‘ Excluded as it were by the pride luxury and caprice of the world from expanding my sensations, and wedding my soul to society, I was constrained to bestow the strong affections that glowed consciously within me upon a few. My mother and sister had a large share of them. To skreen them from the indigence, obscurity, and neglect, to which without my aid they must be doomed, was a hope that encouraged me in the bold project I had conceived.

‘ I determined to dedicate myself to literature, poetry, and particularly to the stage. Essays of the dramatic kind indeed

deed had been made by me very early. At length, I undertook a tragedy ; as a work which, if accomplished with the degree of perfection that I hoped it would be, must at once establish my true rank in society, relieve the wants of my family, and be a passport for me to every man of worth and understanding in the world. How little did I know the world ! Fond fool ! Over credulous idiot ! What cares the world for the toils and struggles, the restless days and sleepless nights of the man of genius ! I am ashamed to think I could be so miserably mistaken !

‘ The ardour with which I began my work, the deep consideration I gave to every character, the strong emotions I felt while composing it, the minute attention I paid to all its parts, and the intense labour I bestowed in planning, writing, correcting, and completing it, were such as I believed must insure success.

‘ Surely mankind can be but little
aware

ware of the uncommon anxieties, pains, and talents that must contribute to the production of such a work ; or their reception of it, when completed, would be very different ! They would not suffer, surely they would not, as they so frequently do, this or that senseless blockhead to frustrate the labour of years, blast the poet's hopes, and render the birth of genius abortive !

‘ My tragedy at length was written ; and by some small number, whose judgment I consulted, was approved : never indeed with that enthusiasm which I, perhaps the overweening author, imagined it must have excited ; but it was approved. “ I was a young man of some merit ; it was more than they had expected.” Nay, I have met with some liberal critics, who have appeared modestly to doubt whether they themselves should have written better !

‘ Before I made the experiment, I had supposed that every man, whose wealth
or

or power gave him influence in society, would start up, the moment it was known that an obscure individual, the usher of a school, had written a tragedy; not only to protect and produce it to the world, but to applaud and honour the author! Would secure him from the possibility of want, load him with every token of respect, and affectionately clasp him to their bosom! The indifference and foolish half-faced kind of wonder, as destitute of feeling as of understanding, with which it was received, by the persons on whom I had depended for approbation and support, did more than astonish me; it pained, disgusted, and jaundiced my mind!

‘ The only consolation I could procure was in supposing that the inhabitants, of the city where I resided, were deficient in literary taste; and that at a more polished place, where knowledge literature and poetry were more diffused, I should meet a very different reception.

Expe-

Experience only can cure the unhackneyed mind of its erroneous estimates !

‘ London however and its far famed theatres were the objects at which my ambition long had aimed ; and thither after various doubts and difficulties it was decreed I should go. The profits of my place I had dedicated to the relief of my family, and my mother’s great fear was that, going up to London so ill provided, I should perish there for want. Of this I was persuaded there could be no danger, and at length prevailed.

‘ The danger however was not quite so imaginary as I in the fervour of hope had affirmed it to be. The plan I proposed was to get another usher’s place, in or near town, till I could bring my piece upon the stage. This I attempted, and made various applications, which all failed ; some because, though I understood Greek, I could not teach merchant’s accounts, or spoil paper by flourishes

ishes and foppery, which is called writing a fine hand; and others because, as I suppose, persons offered themselves whose airs, or humility, or other usher-like qualifications, that had no relation to learning, pleased their employers better than mine.

‘I soon grew weary of these degrading attempts and turned my thoughts to a more attractive resource. While in the country, I had frequently sent little fugitive pieces, to be inserted in periodical publications; and now, on inquiry, I found there were people who were paid for such productions. I made the experiment; and after a variety of fruitless efforts succeeded in obtaining half a guinea a week from an evening paper; which I supplied with essays, little poetical pieces, and other articles, much faster than they chose to print them.

‘In the interim, the grand object for which I **had** left the country was not neglected. It is a common mistake to
imagine

imagine that, to get a piece upon the stage, it is necessary to procure a patron, by whom it shall be recommended. To this I was advised; and, in consequence of this advice, wrote letters to three different persons, whose rank in society I imagined would insure a reception at the theatre to the piece which they should protect. I supposed that every such person, who should hear of a poet who had written a tragedy, would rejoice in the opportunity of affording him aid, and instantly stand forth his patron.

‘ In this spirit I wrote my three letters; and received no answer to any one of them! Amazed at this, I went to the houses of the great people I had addressed; but my face was unknown! Not one of them was at home! I could gain no admission! When now and then suffered to wait in the hall, I saw dancing-masters, buffoons, gamblers, beings of every species that could mislead the head and corrupt the heart, come
and

and go without ceremony ; but to a poet all entrance was denied ; for such chosen society he was unfit. The very rabble, with which these pillared lounging places swarm, looked on him with a suspicious and half contemptuous eye ; that insolently inquired what business had he there ? Were the slaves and menials of Mæcenæ such ? Was it thus at the Augustan court ; when the lord of the conquered world sat banqueting with Virgil on his right hand and Horace on his left ?

‘Why did I read and remember stories so seductive ? Why did I foolishly place all my happiness in the approbation of the great vulgar or the small ; forgetting that approbation neither adds to virtue nor diminishes ? Perhaps, and indeed I fear, my mind was warped. Yet surely the neglect and even odium in which the unobtruding man of genius is at present overwhelmed, is a damning accusation against the rich and titled great.

‘ It

* It was long however before I entirely disdained these abject and fruitless efforts. On one occasion I was fortunate enough, as I absurdly thought, to get introduced to a Marquis. It was an awful honour, to which I was unused; and instead of addressing him with the frothy and impertinent levity which characterized his own manners, and which he encouraged in the creatures that were admitted to his familiarity, I stood confounded, expecting he should have read my play, which I had transcribed for his perusal, have understood the value of the poet who could write it, and have been anxious to relieve that acuteness of sensibility which overclouded and hid the man of genius in the timid abashed and too cowardly author. He spoke to me indeed, nay condescended to repeat two or three of the newest literary anecdotes that had been retailed to him from the blue-stocking-club, and then civilly dismissed me to give audience to a Dutch
bird-

bird-fancier, who had brought him a piping bulfinch. But I saw him no more, he was never afterward at home. I was one of a class of animals that a Marquis never admits into his collection. My tragedy when applied for by letter was returned; with 'sorrow that indispensable engagements had prevented him from reading it; but requested a copy as soon as it should appear in print.' For which, should such a strange event have come to pass, I suppose I should have been insulted with the gift perhaps of one guinea, perhaps of five. And thus a Marquis discharged a duty which his rank and power so well enabled him to perform! But, patience! The word poet shall be remembered with everlasting honour, when the title Marquis shall—Pshaw!

On another occasion an actress, who, strange to tell, happened very deservedly to be popular, and whom before she arrived at the dignity of a London theatre

theatre I had known in the country, recommended me to a dutchess. To this dutchess I went day after day; and day after day was subjected for hours to the prying unmannered insolence of her countless lacquies. This time she was not yet stirring, though it was two o'clock in the afternoon; the next she was engaged with an Italian vender of artificial flowers; the day after the prince and the devil does not know who beside were with her; and so on, till patience and spleen were at daggers drawn.

' At last, from the hall I was introduced to the drawing-room, where I was half amazed to find myself. Could it be real? Should I, after all, see a creature so elevated; so unlike the poor compendium of flesh and blood with which I crawled about the earth? Why, it was to be hoped that I should!

' Still she did not come; and I stood fixed, gazing at the objects around me, longer perhaps than I can now well guess.

The carpet was so rich that I was afraid my shoes would disgrace it ! The chairs were so superb that I should insult them by sitting down ! The sofas swelled in such luxurious state that for an author to breathe upon them would be contamination ! I made the daring experiment of pressing with a single finger upon the proud cushion, and the moment the pressure was removed it rose again with elastic arrogance ; an apt prototype of the dignity it was meant to sustain.— Though alone, I blushed at my own littleness !

‘ Two or three times, the familiars of the mansion skipped and glided by me ; in at this door and out at that ; seeing yet not noticing me. It was well they did not, or I should have sunk with the dread of being mistaken for a thief ; that had gained a furtive entrance, to load himself with some parcel of the magnificence that to poverty appeared so tempting !

‘ This

‘ This time however I was not wholly disappointed : I had a sight of the dutchess, or rather a glimpse. “ Her carriage was waiting. She had been so infinitely delayed by my lord and my lady, and his highness, and Signora ! Was exceedingly sorry ! Would speak to me another time, to-morrow at three o’clock, but had not a moment to spare at present, and so vanished ! ”

‘ Shall I say she treated me proudly, and made me feel my insignificance ? No. The little that she did say was affable ; the tone was conciliating, the eye encouraging, and the countenance expressed the habitual desire of conferring kindness. But these were only aggravating circumstances, that shewed the desirableness of that intercourse which to me was unattainable. I say to me, for those who had a less delicate sense of propriety, who were more importunate, more intruding, and whose forehead was proof against repulse, were more successful. By such

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people

people she was besieged ; on such she lavished her favours, till report said that she impoverished herself ; for a tale of distress, whether feigned or real, if obtruded upon her, she knew not how to resist.

‘ What consolation was this to me ? I was not of the begging tribe. I came with a demand at sight upon the understanding, which whoever refused to pay disgraced themselves rather than the drawer.

‘ She mistook my character, and the next day at three o’clock, instead of seeing me herself, sent me ten guineas in a note, by her French maitre d’hotel ; which chinked as they slid from side to side, and proclaimed me a pauper ! My heart almost burst with indignation ! Yet, coward that I was ! I wanted the fortitude to refuse the polluted paper ! I thought it would be an affront, and still fed myself with the vain hope of procuring from her that countenance
to

to my own labours which I imagined they deserved, and which therefore I did not think it any disgrace to solicit. The disgrace of reducing men of merit to such humiliating situations was not mine.

‘ I went twice more ; and was both times interrogated in French, by the insolent maitre d’hotel, so as to convince me that he thought my coming again so soon was a proof of no common degree of impudence.

‘ Oh Euripides ! Oh Sophocles ! Did not your sublime shades glide wrathful by and menace the wretch in whom your divine art had been so degraded ? How did I pray, as I passed the scowling porter, for the death of your great predecessor ; that some eagle would drop a tortoise on my head, and instantly crush me to atoms !

‘ I had been the more anxious after patronage, because I wished the actress whom I have mentioned to play my heroine. There was no tragedian whose

powers were in the least comparable to hers. But the difficulty of getting a piece on the stage, at the theatre to which she belonged, all the town told me was incredible. It was a chancery-suit, which no given time could terminate. The manager was the most liberal of men, the best of judges, and the first of writers; as void of envy as he was noble minded, and friendly to merit. Yes, friendly in heart and act, when he could be prevailed on to act. But his rare virtues and gifts were rendered useless, extinguished, by the killing vice of procrastination. He never listened to a story that he did not sympathize with the teller of it. The request must be a wild one indeed which he did not feel an instant desire to grant. He would promise with the most sincere and honest intentions to perform; but, hurried away by new petitioners, or projects of a more grand and important nature, he would with still greater facility forget. All who
knew

knew him uniformly affirmed, a soul more expansive, more munificent, could not inhabit a human form; yet, from this one defect, it was frequently his fate where he intended an essential benefit to commit an irreparable injury. He encouraged hopes that were never realized, retarded the merit he meant to promote, and raised up personal enemies who impeded his own utility; conspicuous and grand as this utility was and is, it would otherwise have been unexampled.

‘ I speak the sentiments of men who I believe were incapable of exaggeration. For my own part I have read his works, and I love him almost to adoring.

‘ He is I know assaulted by an infinite number of affairs, that all demand his attention, Many of them are totally beneath it, yet are undertaken by him with a too ready compliance; averse as he is to give the solicitor pain, and continually desirous to make every creature happy. He can do but one thing at once. Of

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the multitude of things to be done, not half are present to the memory at any one time ; and, of those that are remembered, what can he do but select the most urgent ? The mistake has often been rather in the too ready promise than in the non-performance. If prevented by serious occupation, by love of the chosen companions of his convivial hours, or by habits of forgetful reverie, from reading my tragedy and being just to me, I attribute the neglect to its true cause ; which certainly was not jealousy of, or indifference to, the man of talents. How can he honour merit, granting it to exist, with which he is unacquainted ? Yet let me not be misunderstood ; though I love his comprehensive benevolence of soul, I wish it were less undistinguishing :—I cannot applaud or approve the errors into which it leads, both himself and those he means to serve.

‘ In a word, I could find no mode of securing his attention. I endeavoured to
fix

Hopeless therefore of aid from my favourite actress, I sent my play to the other house. How was I relieved, after the delay I had endured and the continual anxiety in which I had been kept, how delighted, by hearing from the manager within a fortnight ! He appointed an interview, received me with affability, and immediately proceeded to the business in question.

He began with telling me, he could have wished I had rather turned my thoughts to the comic than the tragic muse ; for tragedy was less fashionable, and consequently less profitable both to the house and the author, than comedy or opera. I sighed and answered, it was an ill proof of public taste, when it could receive greater pleasure from the uncon-

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nected scenes of an opera than from the fable, pathos, and sublime emotions of tragedy. But I feared the fault was less in the audience than in the poet; and added that the first fortunate writer who should produce a tragedy such as had been written, and such as I hoped it was possible again to write, would find audiences not insensible to his merit.

‘ He replied, it may be so. I can only answer that each author thinks himself the chosen bard you have described, and that each is disappointed. I am pleased, Sir, continued he, with many parts of your tragedy; but I think it has one great fault; it is too tragical: it rather excites horror than terror. Whether the age be more refined or more captious, more humanized or more effeminate than other ages have been I will not pretend to determine; but you have written some scenes that would not at present be endured. If you think proper to make such alterations as shall soften and adapt them

them to the present taste, and if I approve them when made, your piece shall then be performed.

‘I knew not what to reply. The scenes to which he referred were conceived, as I had imagined, in the bold but true stile of tragedy. I intended them to produce a great effect; and was sorry to be informed, as among other things I had been, that ladies would faint, fall into hysterics, and be taken shrieking out of the boxes at hearing them. I had no remedy but to submit, re-consider, and, by lowering the tone of passion, perhaps spoil my tragedy!

‘Oh what a tormenting trade is that of author! He that makes a chair, a table, or any common utensil, brings his work home, is paid for his labour, and there his trouble ends. It was quickly begun, and quickly over; it excited little hope, but it met with no disappointment. The author, on the contrary, has the labour of days months and years to encounter.

encounter. When he begins, his difficulties are immeasurable; and while as he proceeds they seem to disappear, nay at the very moment when he sometimes thinks them all conquered, he discovers that they are but accumulated! Every part, every page, every period, have been considered, and re-considered, with unremitting anxiety. He has revised, rewritten, corrected, expunged, again produced, and again erased, with endless iteration. Points and commas themselves have been settled with repeated and jealous solicitude.

‘At length, as he thinks, his labour is over! He knows indeed that no work of man was ever perfect; but, circumstanced as he is, the eager prying of his own sleepless eye cannot discover what more to amend. He produces the tedious fruits of incessant fatigue to the world, and hopes the harvest will be in proportion to the unwearied and extreme care he has bestowed. Poor man!

Mistaken

Mistaken mortal ! How could he imagine that the sensations of multitudes should all correspond with his own ? Educated in schools so various, under circumstances so contradictory and prejudices so different and distinct, how could he suppose his mind was the common measure of man ? Faultless ? Perfect ? Vain supposition ! Extravagant hope ! The driver of a mill-horse, he who never had the wit to make much less to invent a mouse-trap, will detect and point out his blunders. All satisfied ? No ; not one ! Not a man that reads but will detail, reprove, and ridicule his dull witted errors.

‘ Well ! he finds he is mistaken, he pants after improvement, and listens to advice. He follows it, alters, and again appears. What is his success ? Are cavilers less numerous ? Absurd expectation ! Do critics unite in its praise ? Ridiculous hope ! If he would escape censure,
he

he must betake himself to a very different trade.

‘ It was the month of February when my tragedy was returned. The season was far advanced : I had then been nearly twelve months held in suspense ; seeking the means of appearing before the public, soliciting patronage, and indulging hope. My mother and sister depended much on my aid. Out of the small pittance which the newspaper essays afforded, I at first made a proportionate deduction ; and lived, that is contrived to exist, on the remainder.

‘ This could not long endure, and I sought other channels of emolument. I wrote a novel, which I hawked about among the booksellers. Some of them printed nothing in that way ; others would venture to publish it, and share the profits, but not advance a shilling. One of them offered me five guineas for the two volumes, and told me it was a
great

great price, for he seldom gave more than three.

‘ At last, I was fortunate enough to obtain double the sum. It was printed ; but, being written in haste and in a state of mind entirely adverse to that fine flow which is the token the test and the triumph of genius, its success was less than I expected. Still however it more than answered the hopes of the book-seller ; and I think I may safely affirm, it had marks of mind sufficient to excite applause, mingled with the censure of just criticism.

‘ Did it obtain this applause ? No—
“ A vulgar narrative of uninteresting incidents ” — was the laconic character given of it in that monthly publication in which, from its reputed impartiality, I most hoped for just and candid inquiry.

‘ Finding what a terrible animal a critic is, I determined to become one myself. I made the first essay of my talents

lents for censure on such books as I could borrow, and sent my remarks to the magazines; into which they were immediately admitted.

‘ Thus encouraged, I applied to the publisher of a new review, and informed him of my course of reading, and of the languages and sciences with which I was acquainted. My proposal was graciously received, and I was admitted of that corps which has certainly done much good, and much harm to literature.

‘ I entered on my new office with great determination; but I soon discovered that, to a man of principle, who dare neither condemn nor approve a book he has not read, it was a very unproductive employment. It is the custom of the trade to pay various kinds of literary labour by the sheet, and this among the rest. Thus it frequently happened that a book, which would demand a day to peruse, was not worthy of five lines of animadversion.

* This is the true source of feeble and false criticism ; a task in itself most difficult, and to which the chosen few alone are equal. Deep investigation, scientific acquirement, an acute and comprehensive mind, a correct and invigorating stile, an intelligence superior to prejudice, and an undeviating conscientious spirit of rectitude, are the rare endowments it requires. Its seat should be the summit of mental attainment ; for its office is to enlighten. It has to instruct genius itself, and its powers should be equal to the hardy enterprise. In fine, its object ought to be the love of truth ; it is the lust of gain. I need not expatiate on the consequences ; they are self-evident.

Poor as the trade is, I exercised it with the scrupulous assiduity of which I knew it to be worthy. My labour therefore was as great as my emoluments were trifling ; and, though I made no progress toward fame and fortune, my efforts

efforts were unremitting. I mention these circumstances to shew that my failure, in my attempts to gain what I believe to be my true rank in society, did not originate either in indolence, want of œconomy, or any other neglect of mine. Day or night, I was scarcely ever without either a book or a pen in my hand. With the most sedulous industry and caution I endeavoured to render justice as well to the works of others as to my own. My uniform study was to increase knowledge, diffuse good taste, and, as I fondly hoped, promote the general pleasure and happiness of mankind.

But, while I was anxiously caring for all, no one seemed to care for me. I and my learning, taste and genius, if I possessed them, wandered through the croud unnoticed; or noticed only to be scorned; insulted by the vulgar, for the something in my manner which pretended to distinguish me from themselves; and

and contemned by the proud and the prosperous, because of the forlorn poverty of my appearance. Among the fashionable and the fortunate, where I might have hoped to find urbanity and the social polish of a civilized nation, I could gain no admittance; for I had no title, kept no carriage, and was no sycophant. The doors of the learned were shut upon me; for they were doctors or dignitaries, in church, physic, or law. Of science they were all satisfied they had enough: of profit, promotion, and the other good things of which they were in full pursuit, I had none to give. By my presence they would have been retarded, offended at the freedom of my conversation, and by my friendship disgraced. They sought other and far different associates.

‘Bowed to the earth as I was by this soul-killing injustice, and wearied by these incessant toils, I still did not neglect my tragedy for an hour. I considered and reconsidered

reconsidered the objections that had been made. I was convinced they were ill-founded : but I was not left to the exercise of my own judgment. I had no alternative. To lower the tone of passion was in my opinion to injure my tragedy ; but it must be done, or must not be performed. The manager urged arguments that were and perhaps could not but be satisfactory, to any man in his situation : his experience of public taste was long and confirmed : the nightly expences of a theatre made it a most serious concern : the risk of every new piece was great, for the town was capricious. To obtain all possible security against risk, therefore, was a duty.

‘ The reluctance with which alterations were made occasioned them to be rather slow. At last however I finished them, as much to my own satisfaction as could under such circumstances be expected ; and a fair copy, written as all the

the copies made of it were with my own hand, was again sent to the manager.

‘ A week longer than in the former instances elapsed, before I heard from him; and, when I did hear, the substance of his letter was that he had a new comedy in preparation; which, it being then the middle of March, would entirely fill up the remainder of the season !

‘ What could I do ? No blame was imputable to him for the delay. It was no fault of his that I was pursued by the malice of poverty; that I was tormented with the desire of effectually relieving the necessities of my family; that I had written to my mother and sister, in the elated moment of hope, an assurance of being able to grant this relief in a very few weeks; and that, buoyed up by these calculations, I had indulged myself in procuring a suit of clothes and other necessities, of which I was in extreme need, on credit.

‘ Thou

‘Thou world of vice! thou iron-hearted senseless mass of madness and folly! why did I ever dream that I had the power to arrest thy headlong course, and fix thy bewildered wits, thy garish idiot eye on me? On my weak efforts! my humble wishes! my craving wants! What signs of luxury, what tokens of dissipation, what innumerable marks of extravagant waste did I every where see around me, at the moment that poverty was thus pinching me to the very bone! Here a vain mortal, as insolent as uninstructed, drawn by six ponies; with a postillion before and three idle fellows behind, pampered in vice, that he might thus openly insult common sense, and thus publicly proclaim the folly of his head to be as egregious as the insensibility of his heart was hateful. There trifling and imbecile creatures, who, not satisfied with the appellation woman, call themselves ladies, and expend thousands
on

on their routs, masked-balls, whipped creams, and other froth and frippery, procured from the aches and pains and blood and bones of the poor! Wretches more bent and weighed down by misery than even I was!

‘What need I to recall such pictures to your imaginations? Can you look abroad and not behold them? Are not the vices of unequal distribution to be met with in every corner, nook, and alley? Is not the despotism of wealth, that is, of that property which the folly of man so much reveres and worships, every where visible? Does it not varnish vice, generate crime, and trample virtue and the virtuous in the dust? Is the deep sense which I have entertained of the relentless injustice of society all false?

‘Impelled as I was by paltry yet pressing wants and debts that would admit of no delay, I sought relief in endeavouring to raise money on the presumptive profits

profits of my tragedy. What can the wretch who is thus besieged, thus hunted do, but yield? I had promised aid to my family; and, depending on that promise which had been much too confidently given, my mother was in danger of having her trifling effects seized; my sister, whom I then tenderly loved, of being turned loose perhaps into the haunts of infamy; and myself of being thrown into a loathsome prison.

‘ My first attempt was a very wild one, and proved how little I yet knew of mankind. I wrote a letter to a woman of great fame in the literary world; the reputed writer of a work, the praises of which had been often echoed, and whose wealth was immense. To such a person I thought the appeal I had to make must come with resistless force. For a man of literature, a poet, capable of writing a tragedy, that had already been deemed worthy at least of attention from the theatre, and of the merits of which she

so

so well could judge, for such a man she would be all kindness ! all sensibility ! all soul ! What an incurable dolt was I ! Thus repeatedly to degrade the character of bard, and thus too in vain. I blush ! —No matter !

‘I minutely detailed the circumstances of my case, to this female leader of literature ; and, assiduously endeavouring to avoid every feature of meanness, requested the loan of one hundred pounds ; appealing for the probability of reimbursement to her own conceptions of the rectitude of the mind that could produce the tragedy I sent, and which I requested her first to read. She herself would judge of the danger there might be of its condemnation. If she thought it would fail, I then should be anxious that she should run no risk : but, if not, the loan would be a most essential benefit to me, and perhaps a pleasure to herself.

‘ Fool that I was, thus to estimate ladies’ pleasures ! Whether she did or did

not read my play I never knew ; but this learned lady, this patroness of letters, this be-prosed and be-rhymed dowager, who professed to be the enraptured lover of poetry, wit and genius, returned it with a formal cold apology, that was insulting by its affected pity. ‘ She was *extremely* sorry to be obliged to refuse me ! *extremely* sorry indeed ! It would have given her *infinite* pleasure to have advanced me the sum I required ; but she was then building a *fine* house, which demanded all the money she could *possibly* spare.’

‘ Why ay ! She must have a fine house, with fifty fine rooms in it, forty-nine of which were useless ; while I, my mother, my sister, and millions more, might perish without a hovel in which to shelter our heads !

‘ Convinced at last of the futility of applications like these, I sought an opposite resource. If men would not lend money to benefit me, they would perhaps to benefit themselves. One of the actors,

actors, with whom I became acquainted, informed me that there was a Jew, who frequented all theatrical haunts, knew I had a play in the manager's hands, and might possibly be induced to lend me the sum I wanted. To this Jew I addressed myself, stated the merits of the case, and, fearful of making too high a demand, requested a loan of seventy pounds.

‘ His first question was concerning the security I had to give ? I had none ! The Jew shook his head, and told me it was impossible to lend money without security. I replied, that if making over the profits of my tragedy to the amount of the principal and interest would but satisfy him, to that I should willingly consent. Again he shrugged his shoulders, and repeated it was very dangerous. Jews themselves, kind as they were, could not lend money without security. Beside, money was never so scarce as just at that moment. Indeed he had no such

sum himself; but he had an uncle, in Duke's Place, who, if I could but get good *personal* security, would supply me, on paying a premium adequate to the risk.

‘I must avoid being too circumstantial. I urged every incitement my imagination could honestly suggest: he pretended to state the matter to his uncle. The affair was kept in suspense, and I was obliged to travel to Duke's Place at least a dozen times: but, at last I gave my bond for a hundred pounds; for which I received fifty, and paid two guineas out of it, on the demand of the nephew, for the trouble he had taken in negotiating the business; the uncle being the ostensible person with whom it was transacted.

‘Determined to secure my mother from want as far as was in my power, I remitted the whole sum to her, except what was necessary to pay my immediate debts; and blessed the Jew extortioner,

tioner, as a man who, compared to the learned lady, abounded in the milk of human kindness !

‘ By the continuance of my literary drudgery, the time passed away to the middle of September ; the season at which the winter theatres usually open. I now felt tenfold anxiety concerning my tragedy. The bond I had given at six months would soon become due ; failure would send me to prison, perhaps for life ; it would disgrace me, would distract my family, would cut short my hopes of fame, and the grand progress which I sometimes fondly imagined I should make. Every way it would be fatal ! I trembled at its possibility. Success, which had so lately appeared certain, seemed to become more and more dubious.

‘ During the summer, I had heard nothing from the manager. I now inquired at the theatre, and was told he was at Bath, and would not be in town

in less than a fortnight. I waited with increasing fears, haunted the play-house, and teased the attendants at it with my inquiries. Of these I soon perceived not only the sneers but the duplicity; for, when the manager was returned to town, and, as I was told by a performer, was actually in the theatre, they affirmed the contrary! He had been, but was gone! I plainly read the lie in their looks to each other. At that time it was new to me, and gave me great pain; but I soon became accustomed though never reconciled to their manners; which were characterized by that low cunning, that supercilious mixture of insolence and meanness, that is always detested by the honest and the open. A set of—Pshaw! They are unworthy my remembrance.

‘Finding the manager was now returned, I immediately wrote to him; and a meeting was appointed three days after, at the theatre. He then informed me there were still some few alterations, which

which he was desirous should be immediately made; after which the tragedy should be put into rehearsal, and performed in about three weeks.

‘ This was happy news to me. I returned with an elated heart to make the proposed corrections, finished them the same day, and again delivered the piece into the manager’s hands. He proceeded with a punctuality that delighted me: the parts were cast, and the performers called to the theatre to hear it read.

‘ This was a new scene, a new trial of patience, a new degradation. Instead of that steady attention from my small audience which I expected, that deep interest which I supposed the story must inspire, suffusing them in tears or transfixing them in terror, the ladies and gentlemen amused themselves with whispers, winks, jokes, titters, and giggling; which, when they caught my attention and fixed my eye upon the laughers, were turned

into an affected gravity that added to the insult. No heart panted ! no face turned pale ! no eye shed a tear ! and, if I were to judge from this experiment, a more uninteresting soul-less piece had never been written. But the manager was not present, and I was not a person of consequence enough to command respect or ceremony, from any party. I complained to him of the total want of effect in my tragedy, over the passions of the actors ; but he treated that as a very equivocal sign indeed, and of no worth.

‘ There was another circumstance, of which he informed me, that to him and as it afterward proved to me was of a much more serious nature. They had not been altogether so inattentive as I had imagined. Amid their monkey tricks and common place foolery, their hearts had been burning with jealousy of each other. Neither men nor women were satisfied with their parts. I had three male and two female characters of
great

great importance in the play, but rising in gradation. Of the first of these all the actors were ambitious ; and one of them who knew his own consequence, and that the manager could not carry on the business of the theatre at that time without him, threw up his part.

‘ In vain did I plead, write, and remonstrate. No reasons, no motives of generosity or of justice, to the manager the piece or the public, could prevail ; and his aid, though most essential, could not be obtained. Had the part been totally beneath his abilities, his plea would have been good ; but it was avowedly, in the manager’s opinion and in the opinion of every other performer, superior to half of those he nightly played. That it could have disgraced or injured him partiality itself could not affirm.

‘ And is the poet, after having spent a life in that deep investigation of the human heart which alone can enable him

to write a play, whose efforts must be prodigious, and, if he succeed, his pathos, wit, and genius, rare, is he, after all his struggles, to be at the mercy of an ignorant actor or actress? who, so far from deeply studying the sense, frequently do not remember the words they ought to repeat !

‘Every *mister* is discontented with the character allotted him, each envies the other, and mutters accusations against both author and manager. Sir won’t speak the prologue, it is not in his way ; and Madam will have the epilogue, or she will positively throw up her part. One gentleman thinks his dialogue too long and heavy, and t’other too short and trifling. This fine lady refuses to attend rehearsals : another comes, but has less of the spirit of the author at the fifth repetition than she had at the first. Of their parts individually they know but very little ; of the play as a whole they are absolutely ignorant. On the
first

first representation, by which the reputation of a play is decided, they are so confused and imperfect, owing partly to their imbecility but more still to their indolence, that the sense of the author is mutilated, his characters travestied, and his piece rather burlesqued than performed. The reality of the scene depends on the passions excited in the actor listening almost as essentially as in the actor speaking; but at the end of each speech the player supposes his part is over: the arms attitude, and features, all sink into insignificance, and have no more meaning than the face of Punch when beating Joan.

‘Of the reality of this picture I soon had full proof. My tragedy, after a number of rehearsals, during which all these vexatious incidents and many more were experienced by me, was at length performed. To say that the applause it received equalled my expectations would be false: but it greatly exceeded
the

the expectations of others. It was materially injured by the want of the actor who had refused his part. The reigning vice of recitation, which since the death of Garrick has again prevailed, injured it more. The tide of passion, which should have rushed in torrents and burst upon the astonished ear, was sung out in slow and measured syllables, with a monotonous and funeral cadence, painful in its motion, and such as reminded me of the Sloth and his horrid cry: plaintive indeed, but exciting strange disgust !

‘ My success however was thought extraordinary. The actors when the play was over swarmed into the green-room, to congratulate me. The actresses were ready to kiss me ; good natured souls ! The green-room loungers, newspaper critics, authors, and pretended friends of the house flocked round me, to wish me joy and stare at that enviable animal a successful poet. One of them, himself an approved writer of comedy, offered

offered me five hundred pounds for the profits of my piece, and as far as money was concerned I thought my fortune was made : doubts and difficulties were fairly over, and the reward of all my toils was at last secure. Sanguine blockhead, thus everlastingly to embitter my own cup of sorrow ! Secure ? Oh no ! The nectar of hope was soon dashed from my lips.

‘ I must detail the causes of this reverse ; they were various and decisive.

‘ It had been the custom on the appearance of every new play to give it what is called a run, that is to perform it without intermission as many nights as the house should continue to be tolerably filled. The managers of both theatres had at this time deemed the practice prejudicial, and determined to reform it. Of this reform I was the victim. My play was the first that appeared after the resolution had been taken ; and, in the bills of the day which announced the performance of my tragedy for the Saturday

turday evening, the public were advertised that another piece would be acted on Monday. Ignorant of the true reason, the town misinterpreted this notice into an avowal that no favourable expectations were formed of my tragedy; and, as the author was an obscure person whose name was totally unknown to the world, none of that public curiosity on which popularity depends was excited.

‘ This was but one of the damning causes. My play appeared about the middle of October, when the season continued to be fine : the citizens were all at the watering places, the court was at Windsor, the parliament had not met, and the town was empty.

‘ To add to all this, one of the performers was taken ill on the second night. Another of them thought proper to ride over to Egham races, on the third; where he got drunk and absented himself from the theatre; so that substitutes were obliged to be found for both the parts. In
fine

fine though some few, struck as they affirmed with the merits of the play, were just enough to attempt to bring it into public esteem, it gradually sunk into neglect. My third night, after paying the expences of the house, produced me only twenty pounds. On the sixth night, the receipts were less than the charges, and it was played no more. The overplus of the third night was little more than sufficient to defray the deficiencies of the sixth; and thus vanished my golden dreams of profit, prosperity, and fame!

‘The evil did not rest here. I was in danger of all the misfortunes I had foreseen from the Jew, and the bond. There was not only hardship and severity but injustice in my case, and I determined to remonstrate to the manager. My mind was sore and my appeal was spirited, but proper: it was an appeal to his equity.

‘He listened to me, acknowledged I had been unfortunate, and said that,
though

though the theatre could not and ought not to be accountable for my loss, yet some compensation he thought was justly my due. He therefore gave me a draft on his treasurer for one hundred pounds, and wished me better success in future.

‘ This it is true was of the most essential service to me ; it relieved me, not only from imprisonment, but from the degradation of having my honesty questioned. It did not however restore me to the hope that should have roused me to greater exertions.

‘ Some new efforts indeed I was obliged to make ; for the time consumed in revising my tragedy, and attending rehearsals, had occasioned me to neglect other pursuits, and I was again some few pounds in debt. No dread of labour, no degree of misery could induce me to leave these debts unpaid. I therefore worked and starved till they were all discharged : after which

I returned

I returned to the country, and became usher at the school where I first knew you, Mr. Trevor.

‘ To paint the family distresses that succeeded, the disgrace, the infamy that attended them, the wretchedness that afterward preyed upon me, till I could endure no more, were needless. I was satisfied that I had a right to end a state of suffering, and to be rid of a world that considers itself as burthened not benefited by such creatures as I am. At torments after death, concerning which bigotry and cunning have invented such horrid fables, accusing and blaspheming a God whom they pretend to adore of tyranny the most monstrous, and injustice the most abhorred, at tales like these I laughed.

‘ You, Mr. Turl, say you can shew me better arguments, moral motives that are indispensable, why I ought to live. These are assertions, of which I must consider. You have restored me to life :
prove

prove that you have done me a favour ! Of that I doubt ! My first sensation, after recovering my faculties, was anger at your officious pity : shew me that it was ill timed and unjust. If you have reduced me to the necessity of again debating the same painful and gloomy question, if you cannot give that elasticity to my mind which will animate it to despise difficulty and steel it against injustice, however good your intentions may have been, I fear you have but imposed misery upon me.'

CHAP. X.

REMARKS ON THE MISTAKES OF MR. WILMOT;
BY TURL: LAW, OR IMPORTANT TRUTHS DIS-
CUSSED ; TO WHICH FEW WILL ATTEND,
FEWER WILL UNDERSTAND, AND VERY FEW
INDEED WILL BELIEVE.

THE state of mind into which his mistakes had brought him rendered Wilmot an object of compassion. The tone in
which

which he concluded testified the alarming errors into which he was still liable to fall. For this reason, though Turl treated him with all possible humanity and tenderness, he considered it as dangerous to him, and scarcely less so to me, on whom he perceived the strong impression the narrative had made, to be silent. With a voice and countenance therefore of perfect urbanity, he thus replied.

‘ Do not imagine, Mr. Wilmot, that I have not been deeply penetrated by your sufferings ; that I am insensible of your uncommon worth, or that I approve the vices of society, and the injustice and unfeeling neglect with which you have been treated. Thousands are at this moment subject to the same oppression.

‘ But the province of wisdom is not to lament over our wrongs : it is to find their remedy. Querulous complaint (Pardon me, if my words or expressions have any ill-timed severity : indeed that
is

is far from my intention.) Querulous complaint is worthy only of the infancy of understanding. The world is unjust : and why? Because it is ignorant. Ought that to excite either complaint or anger? Would not the energies of intellect be more worthily employed in removing the cause, by the communication of knowledge?

‘ You bid me restore the elasticity of your mind. Can you look round on the follies and mistakes of men, which you have the power to detect, expose, and in part reform, and be in want of motive? You demand that I should communicate to you the desire of life. Can you have a perception of the essential duties that you are fitted to perform, and dare you think of dying?

‘ You have been brooding over your own wrongs, which your distorted fancy has painted as perhaps the most insufferable in the whole circle of existence! How could you be so blind? Look at
the

the mass of evil, by which you are surrounded ! What is its origin ? Ignorance. Ignorance is the source of all evil ; and there is one species of ignorance to which you and men like you have been egregiously subject : ignorance of the true mode of exercising your rare faculties ; ignorance of their unbounded power of enjoyment.

‘ You have been persuaded that this power was destroyed, by the ridiculous distinctions of rich and poor. Oh, mad world ! Monstrous absurdity ! Incomprehensible blindness ! Look at the rich ! In what are they happy ? In what do they excel the poor ? Not in their greater stores of wealth ; which is but a source of vice, disease, and death ; but in a little superiority of knowledge ; a trifling advance toward truth. How may this advantage be made general ? Not by the indulgence of the desires you have fostered ; the tendency of which was vicious ; but by retrenching those

false wants, that you panted to gratify ; and thus by giving leisure to the poor or rather to all mankind, to make the acquirement of knowledge the grand business of life.

‘ This is the object on which the attention of every wise man should be turned. He that by precept or example shall prevail on community to relinquish one superfluous dish, one useless and contemptible trapping, will be the general friend of man. He who labours for riches, to countenance by his practice their abuse, is labouring to secure misery to himself, and perpetuate it in society. Who ought to be esteemed the most rich? He whose faculties are the most enlarged. How wealthy were you, had you but known it, at the moment your mind was distracting itself by these dirges of distress.

‘ He that would riot in luxury, let him wait the hour of appetite ; and carry his morsel into the harvest field. There
let

let him seat himself on a bank, eat, and cast his eyes around. Then, while he shall appease the cravings of hunger (not pamper the detestable caprice of gluttony) let him remember how many thousands shall in like manner be fed, by the plenty he every where beholds. How poor and pitiable a creature would he be, were his pleasure destroyed, or narrowed, because the earth on which it was produced was not what he had absurdly been taught to call his own !

‘ You complain that the titled and the dignified rejected your intercourse. How could you thus mistake your true rank ? How exalted was it, compared to the ridiculous arrogance you envied ! Were you now visiting Bedlam, would you think yourself miserable because its mad inhabitants despised you, for not being as mighty a monarch as each of themselves ? But little depth of penetration is necessary, to perceive that the lunatics

tics around us are no less worthy of our laughter and our pity.

‘If I do not mistake, you, Mr. Trevor, are hurrying into the very errors that have misled your noble minded friend and instructor. Your active genius is busying itself how to obtain those riches and distinctions on which you have falsely supposed happiness depends. You are in search of a profession, by which your fortune is to be made. Beware ! Notwithstanding that I am frequently assaulted by the same kind of folly myself, I yet never recollect it without astonishment !’

While Turl confined the application of his precepts to Wilmot, I listened and assented with scarcely a doubt : but, the moment he directed them against me, I turned upon him with all the force to which by my passions and fears I was roused.

‘What,’ said I, ‘would you persuade me to renounce those pursuits by which
alone

alone I can gain distinction and respect in society? Would you have me remain in poverty, and thus relinquish the dearest portion of existence?

Olivia was full in my thoughts, as I spoke.

‘Of what worth would life be, were I so doomed? Rather than accept it on such terms, were there ten thousand Serpentine rivers I would drown in them all!’

Turl glanced significantly first at me and then at Wilmot. ‘Do you consider the danger, the possible consequences, of the doctrine you are now inculcating, Mr. Trevor?’

Too much devoured by passion to attend to his reproof, in the sense he meant it, I retorted in a still louder key. ‘I can discover no ill consequences in being sincere. I repeat, were there millions of seas, I would sooner drown in them all! You are continually pushing your philosophy to extremes, Mr. Turl.’

‘You should rather say, Mr. Trevor,

you are pushing your want of philosophy to an extreme.

‘The self denial you require is not in the nature of man.’

‘The nature of man is a senseless jargon. Man is that which he is made by the various occurrences to which he is subjected. Those occurrences continually differ; no two men, therefore, were ever alike. But how are you to obtain the wealth and dignity you seek? By honest means?’

‘Can you suppose me capable of any other?’

‘Alas! How universal, how dangerous, are the mistakes of mankind! Your hopes are childish. The law, I understand, is your present pursuit. Do you suppose it possible to practise the law, in any form, and be honest?’

‘Sir!—Mr. Turl?—You amaze me! Where is the dishonesty of pleading for the oppressed?’

‘How little have you considered the subject!’

subject! How ignorant are you of the practice of the law! Oppressed? Do counsel ever ask who is the oppressed? Do they refuse a brief because the justice of the case is doubtful? Do they not always inquire, not what is justice, but, what is law? Do they not triumph most, and acquire most fame, when they can gain a cause in the very teeth of the law they profess to support and revere? Who is the greatest lawyer? Not he who can most enlighten, but he who can most perplex and confound the understanding of his hearers! He who can best brow-beat and confuse witnesses; and embroil and mislead the intellect of judge and jury. Yet the mischiefs I have mentioned are but the sprouts and branches of this tree of evil; its root is much deeper: it is in the law itself; and in the system of property, of which law is the support.'

'Pshaw! These are the distempered dreams of reform run mad.'

‘Are they? Consider! Beware of the mischief of deciding rashly! Beware of your passions, that are alarmed lest they should be disappointed.’

‘It is you that decide. Prove this rooted evil of law.’

‘Suppose me unable to prove it: are its consequences the less real? But I will endeavour.

‘He, who is told that, “to do justice is to conduce with all his power to the well being of the whole,” has a simple intelligible rule for his conduct.

‘He, on the contrary, who is told that, “to do justice is to obey the law,” has to inquire, not what is justice! but, what is the law? Now to know the law, (were it practicable!) would be not only to know the statutes at large by rote, but all the precedents, and all the legal discussions and litigations, to which the practitioners of law appeal! Innumerable volumes, filled with innumerable subtleties and incoherencies, and written

in a barbarous and unintelligible jargon, must be studied ! Memory is utterly inadequate to the task ; and reason revolts, spurns at and turns from it with loathing.

‘ A short statement of facts will, in my opinion, demonstrate that law, in its origin and essence, is absolutely unjust.

‘ To make a law is to make a rule, by which a certain class of future events shall be judged.

‘ Future events can only be partially and imperfectly foreseen.

‘ Consequently, the law must be partial and imperfect.

‘ Let us take the facts in another point of view—The law never varies.

‘ The cases never agree.

‘ The law is general.

‘ The case is individual.

‘ The penalty of the law is uniform.

‘ The justice or injustice of the case is continually different.

‘ To prejudge any case, that is, to give a decided opinion on it while any of the circumstances remain unknown, is unjust even to a proverb. Yet this is precisely what is done, by making a law.’

‘ This is strange doctrine, Mr. Turl!’

‘ Disprove the facts, Mr. Trevor. They are indisputable; and on them the following syllogism may indisputably be formed.

‘ To make a law is publicly to countenance and promote injustice.

‘ Publicly to countenance and promote injustice is a most odious and pernicious action.

‘ Consequently, to make a law is a most odious and pernicious action.

‘ How unlimited are the moral mischiefs that result! To make positive laws is to turn the mind from the inquiry into what is just, and compel it to inquire what is law!

‘ To make positive laws is to habituate
and

and reconcile the mind to injustice, by stamping injustice with public approbation !

‘ To make positive laws is to deaden the mind to that constant and lively sense of what is just and unjust, to which it must otherwise be invariably awake, by not only encouraging but by obliging it to have recourse to rules founded in falsehood !

‘ Each case is law to itself : that is, each case ought to be decided by the justice, or the injustice arising out of the circumstances of that individual case ; and by no other case or law whatever ; for the reason I have already given, that there never were nor ever can be two cases that were not different from each other.

‘ I therefore once more warn you, Mr. Trevor, that law is a pernicious mass of errors ; and that the practitioners of it can only thrive by the mischiefs which they themselves produce,

duce, the falsehoods they propagate, and the miseries they inflict !’

‘ This would be dangerous doctrine to the preacher, were it heard in Westminster hall.’

‘ I am sorry for it ! I am sorry that man can be in danger from his fellow men, because he endeavours to do them good !’

CHAP. XI.

PAINFUL MEDITATIONS : A NEW PROJECT FOR
ACQUIRING WEALTH : A JOURNEY TO BATH.

1
THAT the reader may judge of the arguments of Turl, I have been anxious to state them simply ; and not perplexed with the digressions, commentaries, cavils, and violent opposition they met with from me. Striking as they did at the very root of all my promised pleasures, how could I listen and not oppose ? Destroying as they did all my towering
hopes

hopes at a breath, what could I do but rave? When my arguments and my anger were exhausted, I sat silent for a while, sunk in melancholy revery. At length I recovered myself so far as to endeavour to console Mr. Wilmot, offer him every assistance in my power, and persuade him to an interview with his sister. Aided by the benevolent arguments of Turl, this purpose was with some little difficulty effected, and I returned home to relate to Miss Wilmot what had happened.

In very bitterness of soul I then began to meditate on the prospect before me. The sensations I experienced were at some moments agonizing! Could I even have renounced fame and fortune, and patiently have resigned myself to live in obscure poverty, yet to live, as in such a case I must do, without Olivia would be misery to which no arguments could induce me to submit. But how obtain her? Where were all my bright visions

fled? Poor Wilmot! What an example did he afford of ineffectual struggles, talents neglected, and genius trampled in the dust! Was there more security for me? Turl indeed seemed to resign himself without a murmur, and to be happy in despite of fate. But he had no Olivia to regret! If he had, happiness without her would be impossible!

To attempt to repeat all the tormenting fears that hurried and agitated my mind, on this occasion, were fruitless. Suffice it to say, this was one of those severe conflicts to which by education and accident I was subject; and it was not the least painful part of the present one that I could come to no decision.

I persuaded myself indeed that, with respect to law, Turl's reasoning was much too severe and absolute. It was true I could not but own that law was inclined to debase and corrupt the morals of its practitioners; but surely there were exceptions, and if I pursued the
law

law why should not I be one of them. If therefore the happiness at which I aimed were attainable by this means, I asserted to myself that I had heard no reasons which ought to deter me from practising the law.

In the mean time, I had conceived a project that related to the immediate state of my feelings; the acuteness of which I was obliged to seek some method to appease. Olivia was gone to Bath, with her aunt; and thither I was determined to follow her.

Full of this design, I dispatched Philip with orders that a post chaise should be ready at the door by nine o'clock the next morning; after which, to rid myself as much as possible of the thoughts that haunted me, I once more went in search of the false Belmont.

I found him at the usual place engaged at play. The betting was high, he appeared to be overmatched, and for a few games his antagonist, who like himself -

himself was a first rate player, triumphed. My passions were always of the touch-wood kind. Rouzed and tempted by the bets that were so plentifully offered, the thought suddenly occurred how possible it was for a man of penetration, who could keep himself perfectly cool, as I was persuaded I could (What was there indeed that I persuaded myself I could not do?) to make a fortune by gambling! I did not indeed call it by the odious term gambling: it was calculation, foresight, acuteness of discernment. My morality was fast asleep; so intent was I on profiting by this new and surprisingly certain source of wealth! and so avaricious of the means that at a glance seemed to promise the gratification of all my desires!

I had not frequented a billiard table without having exercised my own skill, learned the odds, and obtained a tolerable knowledge of the game itself. So fixed was my cupidity on its object that
I be-

I began with the caution of a black-leg ; made a bet, and the moment the odds turned in my favour secured myself by taking them ; hedged again, as the advantage changed ; and thus made myself a certain winner. I exulted in my own clearness of perception ! and wondered that so palpable a method of winning should escape even an idiot !

The experience however of a few games taught me that my discovery was not quite of so lucrative a nature as I had supposed. The odds did not every game vary, from side to side ; people were not always inclined to bet the odds ; and, if I would run no great risk, I even found it necessary to bet them sometimes myself. Every man who has made the experiment knows that the thirst of lucre, when thus awakened in a young mind, is insatiable, impetuous, and rash. I was weary of petty gains, and riches by retail. The ardour with which I examined the players, and each circumstance

circumstance as it occurred, persuaded me that there were tokens by which an acute observer might discover the winning party. I had on former occasions remarked that players but rarely win game and game alternately, even when they leave off equal; but that success has a tide, with a kind of periodical ebb and flow. This said I may be attributed to the temper of the players; the loser is too angry to attend with sufficient caution to his game; he persuades himself that luck is against him, strikes at random, and does mischief every stroke. After a while the winner grows careless, loses a game, and becomes angry and conquered in turn.

Exulting in my prodigious penetration, and fortified in my daring by reasoning so deep, I determined to hedge no more bets. Belmont, whose notice my sudden rage for betting had by no means escaped, was at this time losing, and I was backing his antagonist. To one of the bets
I offered,

I offered, he said, 'Done;' and, though I felt a reluctance to win his money, it seemed ungentlemanlike to refuse. I won the three first bets; and, exulting in my own acuteness and certainty, intreated him in pity to desist. He refused, and I pleaded the pain I felt at winning the money of a friend. Beside, it was not only dishonourable but dishonest; it was absolutely picking his pocket!

My triumph was premature. From this time fortune veered, and he began to win. I was then willing to have taken the other side, but could not procure a bet. He bantering bade me not be afraid of winning my friend's money; it was neither dishonourable, dishonest, nor picking his pocket. Piqued by his sarcasms, I continued till I had lost five and twenty guineas; and then my vexation and pride, which almost foamed at the suspicion of my own folly, made me propose to bet double or quit. I lost
again,

again, again resorted to the same desperate remedy, and met with the same ill success. My frenzy was such that I a third time urged him to continue. Fortunately for me his antagonist would play no more, and I was left to reflect that my calculations and avaricious arts to rob fools and outwit knaves were as crude as they were contemptible.

Wrung as I was to the heart, I was ashamed of having it supposed that the loss of my hundred guineas in the least affected me. Belmont insisted that I should sup with him, and when I attempted to decline his invitation bantered me out of my refusal, by asking if I had parted with my hundred guineas to purchase the spleen. During supper I informed him of my intended journey to Bath; and he immediately proposed to accompany me, telling me that he had himself had the same intention. On this we accordingly agreed, and I left him early and retired to bed; but not
to

to rest. The quick decay of my small substance, the helpless state in which I found myself, the impatience with which I desired wealth and power, and the increasing distance at which I seemed to be thrown from Olivia by this last act of folly, kept me not only awake but in a fever of thought.

The next day we set off, and arrived at Bath the same evening; where the first inquiries I made were at the Pump-room, to learn where Olivia and her aunt were lodged. So inconsiderate and eager were my desires, that I endeavoured to obtain apartments in the same house; but ineffectually, they were all let. I was recommended to others however in Milsom-street, in which I fixed my abode. There was not room for Belmont, and he got lodgings on the South Parade.

CHAP. XII.

DESPERATE MEASURES: OLIVIA AND HER
AUNT: A RASH ACCUSATION; AND ITS
STRANGE CONSEQUENCES: AFFAIRS BROUGHT
TO A CRISIS.

BEFORE I proceed to the history of my Bath adventures, it is necessary to take a brief retrospect of the state of my affairs. The total of my expences, from the time that I received the four hundred and fifty pounds of Thornby, to my arrival at Bath, was about two hundred and forty pounds, including the sum I had lost at billiards, the money I had paid for printing my pamphlet (the last sheet of which I corrected before I left town) thirty pounds that in consequence of a letter from my mother I remitted to her, and twenty for the purchase of a lottery ticket; for, among other absurd

surd and vicious ways of becoming rich, that suggested itself to my eager fancy.

The quick decay of my very small inheritance lay corroding at my heart, and prompted me to a thousand different schemes, without the power of determining me to any. My general propensity however was more to the desperate, which should at once be decisive, than to the slow and lingering plans of timid prudence. In reality both seemed hopeless, and therefore the briefest suffering was the best. At some short intervals the glow of hope, which had lately been so fervid, would return, and those powers of thought that seemed to be struggling within me would promise great and glorious success; but these were only flashes of lightening darting through a midnight sky, the texture of which was deep obscurity; "darkness visible."

To one point however I was fixed, that of using every endeavour to learn
the

the true sentiments of Olivia respecting me ; and, if any possible opportunity offered, of declaring my own. To effect this I resolved, since I knew not what better method to take, that I would watch the few public places to which all the visitors at Bath resort. I therefore immediately subscribed to the upper and lower rooms, and traversed the city in every direction.

People, not confined to their chamber, are here sure to be soon met with ; and, on the second morning after my arrival, I discovered Olivia, seated at the farther end of the Pump-room. She had an old lady, who proved to be her aunt, by her side ; and a circle round her, in which were several handsome fellows, who my jealous eye instantly discovered were all ambitious of her regard.

The moment I had a glimpse of her, I was seized with a trembling that shook my whole frame, and a sickness that I with difficulty subdued. I approached,
stopped,

stopped, turned aside, again advanced, again hesitated, and was once more almost overcome by a rising of the heart that was suffocating, and a swimming of the brain that made my limbs stagger, my eyes roll, and deprived me of sight.

It was sometime before I could make another attempt. At length I caught her eye. With the rapidity of lightening her cheek was suffused with blushes, and as instantaneously changed to a death-like pale. It was my habitual error to interpret every thing in my own favour; and the conviction that she was suffering emotions similar to my own was transport to me.

For some minutes I mingled with the croud, fearful of a relapse on my own part and on hers, but keeping her in sight, and presenting myself to her view, till I was roused by an apparent motion of the aunt to rise. I then advanced, but still in an ague fit of apprehension. I attempted to bow, and in a faltering
and

and feeble voice pronounced her name, 'hoped she was well, and'—I could proceed no farther.

My disease was infectious. She sat a moment, severely struggling with her feelings, and then returned a kind of inarticulate complimentary answer.

'What is the matter Olivia?' said the aunt. 'How strangely you look child? Who is the gentleman?'

Olivia made another effort.—'It is Mr. Trevor, Madam; the grandson of the rector of * * *.'

'Oh ho! The young Oxonian that my nephew Hector tells the comical story about; of the methodist preacher, and of his throwing you into the water, and then taking you out again.'

The tone, form, and features of the old lady, with this short introductory dialogue, gave me a strong, but no encouraging picture, of her character. Her voice was masculine, her nose short, her mouth wide, her brow bent and bushy,
and

and the corners of her eyes and cheeks deeply wrinkled. I attempted to enter into conversation, but my efforts were awkward ; the answers of the aunt were broad, coarse, and discouraging ; and Olivia, though embarrassed, I accused of being cold. The manner of the old lady clearly indicated, that she suspected my design ; and an endeavour in me to prolong the conversation, by turning it on my native county, drew from her the following animadversions.

‘ I have heard a great deal about your family, Mr. Trevor ; and of the ridiculous opposition which your grandfather pretended to make to my late brother, Mowbray. Your mother, I think, was twice married, and, as I have been told, both times very imprudently ; so that the proud hopes which the rector entertained of raising a family were all overthrown. But that is always the case with clandestine matches. Many families, of much greater consequence than
ever

ever yours was, Mr. Trevor, have been brought low by such foolish and wicked doings. Young girls that have indulged improper connections, and secret lovers, have involved themselves, and all their relations, in ruin by their guilty proceedings. You are but a petty instance of the base and bad consequences of the crimes of such foolish young hussies. Come, niece !'

They both rose to go. The dialogue that had just passed had no listeners, though of that circumstance the aunt was evidently regardless. The circle round Olivia had presently dispersed, as good manners required, when I a stranger came up. The repugnant and ominous behaviour of the aunt did but increase the impetuous haste that I felt to know the worst, and addressing myself to Olivia, I asked with some eagerness, ' If I might be permitted to pay her my respects while she continued at Bath ?'

The aunt fixed her eye on me, ' Look you,'

you,' said she, ' Mr. Trevor, you are a handsome young fellow, and I do not want handsome young fellows about my niece. I see too many of them: they have little fortune, and less shame; they give me a deal of trouble; no good can come of their smirking and smiling, their foppery and their forward prate. My niece I believe has much more prudence than is usual with the young minxes of the present day. But no matter for that: I am sure there is no prudence in setting gunpowder too near the fire. I have heard her talk of your taking her out of the water in a manner that, if I did not know her, I should not quite like. So I must plainly tell you, Sir, as I can see no good that can come of your acquaintance, I shall take care to prevent all harm. Not that there is much fear, for she knows her duty, and has always done it. Neither can you have entertained any impertinent notions: it would be too ridiculous! Though what my ne-

phew and Mr. Andrews told me, I own, did seem as if you could strangely forget yourself. But at once to cut matters short, I now tell you plainly, and down right, her choice is made. Yes, Sir, her choice is positively made ; and so, though I do not suppose you have taken any foolish crotchets, and improper whims into your head, for that would be too impertinent, yet as you knew one another when children, and so forth, it was best to be plain with you at once, because, though such ridiculous nonsense was quite impossible, I hear on all hands you are a bold and flighty young gentleman, and that you have no little opinion of yourself.'

Dumb founded as I was by this undisguised refusal, this hard, unfeeling reprimand, I made no attempt to reply or follow. The flushings of Olivia's face indeed were continual ; but what were they more than indignant repellings of her aunt's broad surmises ? Had they been
been

been favourable to me why did she not declare them with the openness of which she had so striking an example? She curtsied as she went; but it was a half-souled compliment, that while I attempted to return my heart resented.

They disappeared, and I remained, feeling as if now first made sensible of the extreme folly, the lunacy of all my actions! The dialogue I had just heard vibrated in my brain, burning and wasting it with the frenzy of agonizing recollection. "I was a forward prating fop, of little fortune, and less shame! Bold and flighty, with no little opinion of myself; again and again I was ridiculous, and impertinent! My crotchets whims and nonsense were impossible!"

Nor was this all! There was another piece of intelligence; an additional and dreadful feature of despair; the name of Andrews! Detested sound! Racking idea! "Her choice is made; positively made!" Excruciating thought! Why

then, welcome ruin ! sudden and irrevocable ruin !

As soon as I could recover sufficient recollection, I hurried home ; where I remained in a trance of torment, and disposed to a thousand acts of madness that were conceived and dismissed with a rapidity of pain that rendered my mind impotent to all, except the inflicting torture on itself.

At last, the agony in which I sat was interrupted by the appearance of Belmont. We had agreed to go to Lansdown races, he told me it was now time, took me by the arm, and hurried me away.

Reckless of where I went, or what I did, I obeyed. The course was at no great distance, a carriage was not to be procured, and we walked. The steepness of the hill, the heat of the day, and above all the anguish of my heart, threw me into a violent heat. The drops rolled down my cheeks, and I put my handkerchief

kerchief lightly into my hat, to prevent its pressure. Lost in a revery of misery, I acted instinctively, and breathed the dust, heard the hubbub, and saw the confusion around me without perceiving them.

After the first heat there was a battle, toward which I was dragged by Belmont. In the tumult and distraction of my thoughts, I scarcely knew what happened; and feeling in my pocket for my handkerchief I missed it. A croud and a pick-pocket was an immediate suggestion. Neither coolness nor recollection were present to me. I saw a man putting up a red and white handkerchief, which I supposed to be mine, and springing forward, I caught him by the collar, and exclaimed, 'Rascal, you have robbed me!' In an instant the mob flocked round us, and the supposed pick-pocket was seized. 'Duck him! Duck him!' was the general cry; and away the poor fellow was immediately hurried. Half
awakened

awakened by the unpremeditated danger into which I had brought him, I began to repent. Belmont, who had lost sight of me, came up, and asked what was the matter.

‘A fellow has picked my pocket,’ said I.

‘Of what?’

‘Of my handkerchief.’

‘Your handkerchief? Is it not under your hat?’

I snatched it off, examined, and there the handkerchief was!—I was struck speechless!

The man whom I had falsely accused made a violent resistance; the mob was dragging him along, rending his clothes off his back, and half-tearing him in pieces. The state of my mind was little short of frenzy. In a tone of command, I bade Belmont follow, made my way into the thickest of the croud, and furiously began to beat the people who were ill using the prisoner; calling till I

was hoarse, ' Let him alone ! He is innocent ! I am to blame !'

My efforts were vain. A mob has many hands but no ears. My blows were returned fifty fold. I was enveloped by one mob myself, while the poor wretch was hauled along by another. Not all my struggles could save him. I could not get free ; and the man, as Belmont afterward informed me, was half drowned ; after which he escaped, and nobody knew what was become of him.

These were but a part of the accidents of the day. My mind was maddening, and I was ripe for mischief. Belmont in the evening went to the hazard table, and I determined to accompany him, to which he encouraged me. The impetus was given, and, as if resolved on destruction, I put all my money, except a ten pound note to pay my Bath debts, in my pocket. Though ignorant of the cause of them, Belmont discovered my inclinations.

nations. He took care to be at the place before the company assembled.

An accomplice (as I afterward learned) was present, who displayed guineas and bank notes sufficient to convince me that he was my man, if I could but win them. I was as eager as they could desire, and to increase my ardour was occasionally suffered to win a rich stake. My success was of short duration; I soon began to lose and foam with rage. In the midst of this scene, Hector Mowbray and tall Andrews came in; who unknown to me were at Bath. They saw me close my accounts, and by their looks enjoyed my fury. The whole company, which now began to be numerous, understood that I left off play because I had no more money to lose. The pigeon was completely plucked.

This was the climax of misery, at which I seemed ambitious to arrive. During six hours, I sat in a state of absolute

solite stupor ; and echoed the uproar and blasphemy that surrounded me with deep but unconscious groans. I do not know that I so much as moved, till the company was entirely dispersed, and I was awakened from my torpor by the groom porter. I then languidly returned to my lodging, exhausted and unable longer to support the conflicting torture.

END OF VOL. III.